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THE MEDICINE MAN

BY

H. D. TRAILL

AND

ROBERT HICHENS

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PERSONS IN THE PLAY.

Lord Belhurst
Colonel Anson
Canon Slade-Smith
Algernon Warrington
Dr. Tregenna
Dr. Rainham
Sir Clement Hope
Captain Stopton
Mr. Grayston
Bill Burge
Sam Cheeseman
Joe Green
Charley Tagg
Carrots
Tommy Long
Lady Agatha Warrington
Mrs. Culling
Hon. Miss Drake
Lady Mary Mayne
Dora Bell
Mrs. Burge
Hon. Sylvia Wynford

ACT I.

SCENE.— *The Lecture Hall and Reading Room of "University House": a settlement for the poor of East London. Time, 9 p. m.; a wild night in March; a snow storm raging without. At intervals during the scene men enter the hall through door* C., *which they shut with difficulty after them, kicking the snow from their heavy boots. The lecture platform to* R. *of stage consists of a low dais but one step above the floor, and is furnished with the usual reading-desk, lamp, and water-carafe with glass. At* L. *end of the room, facing the platform, a large open fireplace with fire burning. An East-end audience of the usual type seated on benches at back of room and at round tables on which are newspapers and empty coffee-cups. A clear space in* C. *of stage so that door* C. *is in uninterrupted view. On wall to the* R. *of it a birdcage containing a canary. Close to the fireplace at back sits* BILL BURGE, *a huge ruffian, in a drunken stupor, with his elbows on one of the round tables and his head buried in his arms. At the reading-desk,* Canon SLADE-SMITH. *On the platform at his side,* Mr. ALGERNON *and* Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON, *and one or two other fashionable visitors.*

Canon. [*With unction.*] And now, my very dear friends, in conclusion of my lecture to-night, one word—one simple, homely, and, I venture to trust, blessed

word! My theme has been "*The power of the human will for good or evil.*" Let us never forget that the very humblest among us is endowed with this mysterious power, and can exercise it upon others. Let us all beware, then, of using this faculty to the hurt of those around us.

[*A faint clapping of hands and stamping of heavy boots is heard. A pause of a few seconds, after which* Canon SLADE-SMITH *bends towards* Mr. ALGERNON WARRINGTON *and whispers in his ear.*

Mr. W. [*Alarmed.*] Oh, come, I say, Canon! I didn't bargain for that, I assure you! 'Pon my honour, never said a word, except at a hunt breakfast, or a comin' of age, or that sort of thing.

Lady A. Don't be so absurd, Algernon. You know you can speak *beautifully* when you like.

Mr. W. Oh, well, if I must—h'm!—ha! Er—[*clears his throat*]—Ladies and Gentlemen——

Canon. [*Aside to him, hurriedly.*] One moment, Mr. Warrington; would you mind addressing them as "My friends"; it sounds so much more human, don't you think?

Mr. W. Eh! What? Oh, certainly; with the greatest pleasure. I have been—er—requested, ladies and—I mean, my friends, to say a few words on Canon Slade-Smith's most interesting lecture. I'm sure we have all listened to it with the greatest pleasure and—er—profit. I—er—won't attempt to add anything to what the lecturer has said about the great will-power of the—er—the human will——

Canon. [*Leaning towards him.*] For good or evil.

Mr. W. I beg your pardon?

Canon. For good or evil.

Mr. W. Exactly—for good or evil, and how we may all learn to strengthen it by exertin' it continually on—er—on something or other. I'm sure we must all feel that the human will is a very wonderful and powerful thing—er—especially when it is a woman's. [*A laugh.*

Lady A. [*Severely.*] Algernon, you are on the verge of becoming vulgar.

Mr. W. [*Disconcerted.*] But of course our very dear friend the Canon has gone much deeper into these things than I can pretend to have done. I am sure he has given us all a great deal to think about, and I will therefore conclude these few remarks by assurin' you all of the great pleasure it has given Lady Agatha and myself to have been present to-night at this gatherin', with—er—er—its knittin' together of classes and—er—promotin' that common feelin' of friendliness among all classes which—er—we must all feel that we ought to feel towards each other.

[Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON *rises; the others follow her example.*

Capt. S. Well done, Warrington! Had no idea you were so ready. He ought to be in the House, eh, Lady Agatha? The House needs such men—what?

Lady A. [*Coldly.*] The House already possesses an abundance of such men, I believe. *So* sorry we are obliged to go, dear Canon Slade-Smith, and miss the discussion of your *charming* lecture. But such a dreadful night, and one of the horses coughing this morning, I really am afraid to. Good night! *Good* night! I suppose we shall see you at Lord Belhurst's ball?

Canon. [*Embarrassed.*] Er—h'm—*good* night. [*Aside to* Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON.] I think it better to keep my occasional—my very occasional—gaieties from these

humble folk. The painful sense of contrast, you know, dear Lady Agatha. Good night, good night.

[*Bowing her out. Exeunt party.*

Canon. And now, my friends, which of you will open the discussion on the subject of my lecture? [*A silence.*] Is there anything in what I have said which you would like to have explained to you? [*Continued silence.*] I hope you have all thoroughly grasped my main proposition, that the will of man is—under Providence [*unctuously*]—the paramount power of the world; and that when directed by faith it can, like faith, move mountains. [*Silence continues.*] Let me illustrate my meaning by an example. I will take the case of a man well known to most of those who hear me, and I am sure beloved for his untiring labours in your service. [*Slight movement among the* Canon's *auditory.*] On how many an errand of mercy has Dr. Tregenna visited the courts and alleys of this district! How many among you—a—a—among us, with faculties besotted and health undermined with drink and debauchery, has he rescued either from death itself or from worse than death—from lives haunted by the phantoms which your own—a—a—our own vices and evil habits have raised up! Yet his treatment of mental maladies in that home of his at Hampstead, where, as you know, he receives all poor patients free of charge, is itself purely mental. His cures seem like miracles? Are they not indeed a—— [*A half-suppressed laugh from one of the audience.*] What was that expression of opinion? Did I catch a note of dissent?

[*Murmurs in the quarter from which the laugh proceeded.*

Joe Green. Shut yer 'ed, Sam!

Charley Tagg. Let 'im speak, carn't yer?

Carrots. *'E* knows more'n you think!

Sam. [*A little costermonger, seated at one of the back*

tables, indignantly to the friends who are trying to repress him.] Dr. Tregenna and his merrikles! Haw! haw! [*In a louder voice.*] Wot are yer givin' us, guv'nor?

Canon. [*Blandly.*] What am I giving you, my friend? A simple statement of facts. But if you have anything to say against it, step forward like an honest, manly fellow, as I am sure you are, and speak out.

[*Mass movement at back. Attempts are made to push* SAM CHEESEMAN *to the front.*

Sam. [*Angrily.*] Oo are yer shovin' of? Think I want to get run in for deformin' the bloke's carrickter?

[SAM CHEESEMAN *is thrust forward into the open space in the middle of the room, and stands there, sheepish but dogged, awaiting questions.*

Canon. Why, it's Samuel Cheeseman! Samuel, you surprise me! You, of all men, to question Dr. Tregenna's powers! You knew Susan Minch. Come, I have seen you walking out with her on Sundays. Well, didn't Dr. Tregenna cure Susan Minch's fits?

Sam. [*Sulkily.*] Ah! he did that.

Canon. He did? And yet you——

Sam. [*Mysteriously.*] Just you wite a bit for Susan Minch.

Canon. Wait a bit for Susan Minch? What on earth do you mean?

Sam. [*Darkly.*] She ain't a-goin' to make old bones, Susan ain't; I seen that the fust day after she came back.

Canon. [*Scornfully.*] Susan Minch! She is only one of dozens and scores of sufferers from every kind of brain trouble who have passed through the doctor's hands during the last three years and have returned to their friends sane and sound as the best of you.

Sam. Wot d'yer say? For the last three years? Show us any cove as he cured three years ago.

Canon. [*After a moment's reflection.*] Well, Job Nevins, the dock labourer. Dr. Tregenna took him to Hampstead the day after he attempted his life in a fit of melancholy mania, and sent him back in three or four months as right in his head as you are. That must have been fully three years ago, and Job only died the other day.

Sam. That's just it, Guv'nor! Do they, any on 'em, live long arter they come out of that there bloomin' Retreat? And [*still more gloomily*] do they, any on 'em, like to talk about what they went through while they *wos* there? I tell yer, it's the same with all of them. A cove 'as a touch of the 'orrors from too much booze, or he gets a fit of the miserables from listening to the Salvation Army, and just then the Doctor turns up on one of his "arrands of mercy," as you call 'em—haw! haw! rum sort of arrands on that lay, they are—and he says, "I see wot's the matter with you, my man. You come along o' me an' be cured!" And somehow—[*dropping his voice*]—somehow, *they 'as to go.*

Canon. Well, but if they come out sound in their brains——

Sam. [*Contemptuously.*] Sound in their brines, says you. Why, they ain't got 'ardly any brines to be sound in. They're like mopin' idjits 'arf their time; and they just get lower and lower till they go out like a bloomin' lamp when the ile runs dry.

Canon. But, good heavens! what do you suggest happens to them under the Doctor's hands? What, in the name of common sense, do you think he takes them in for?

Sam. [*Retiring sulkily within himself.*] Oh, I d'n' know! 'Tain't none of my business. I ain't a-goin' to get *my*self into trouble by——

Canon. Oh! if you're too much of a coward, Sam

Cheeseman, to do more than hint at charges you are afraid to——

Sam. [*Desperately.*] Who says I'm afraid? Well then, if you ask me what he 'unts up patients down here for, I says it's to play his doctor's tricks on 'em, to practise his pretty igsperiments on 'em—same as they do on us poor blokes at the 'orspitals.

Canon. [*Indignantly.*] The same as they do at the hospitals! Oh, so that's it, is it? Come, my friends! you hear what this man's vile suspicions are, and I am sure you will join with me in declaring them with one indignant voice as groundless as they are wicked. [*A sombre silence.*] What! not one of you with the grace to say that you believe in your unwearied benefactor?

Mrs. B. [*A thin, wiry working woman, with a shrewd, humorous face and a well-marked black eye, stands up at one of the front tables.*] Yes, Mr. Canon, I does. And I only wish I could send the doctor one patient as I knows on.

Canon. And who is that?

Mrs. B. My 'usband, Bill Burge.

[*A volley of hoarse guffaws.*

Joe Green. Oh, lor'! Bill Burge!

Carrots. Haw! haw! that's a good 'un!

Tommy Long. Blimy! why, if the doctor can cure *'im!*

Canon. [*Mildly.*] Who is this Bill Burge? I don't seem to recollect his name as a regular attendant at our lectures. [*More guffaws.*

Sam. No, Guv'nor, I should rather think you don't. Lectures, says you. What do yer say, pals? Do you think Bill Burge is takin' any? [*Another roar.*

Mrs. B. [*Excitedly.*] Yes, you may laugh, fellers. It ain't no laughin' matter for me. Look at him a layin' there stoopid drunk. [*Points to* BILL BURGE.]

And lucky for me he is, or he'd soon be makin' this—[*touching her black eye*]—into a lovely pair.

Tommy Long. [*In a high piping tone and quick, brisk utterance.*] 'Ow'd you get 'im here, missus?

Carrots. I seen him at the "Bag o' Nails" a 'our ago well on.

Mrs. B. He thought I was a-takin' him to the "Bargeman's Rest," where he ain't got so big a score. [*Another laugh.*] But, oh, Mr. Canon—[*excitedly*]—I I wish you and the Doctor could do suthin to 'elp a pore woman. I got to take 'im 'ome again as best I can, after this, and he'll begin bashin' me as soon as ever he wakes to-morrow morning.

Bill. [*Who has raised his head during the last speech, and has been showing signs of returning consciousness.*] Wot do yer say? [*Rising to his feet and speaking in a fiercer tone.*] To-morrow morning? It'll be before that, yer sneakin' cat. [*Shaking his fist at her.*] Ah, I 'eard yer—tellin' tales again.

Mrs. B. [*Frightened.*] Garn! I warn't tellin' no tales.

Bill. [*With increasing fury.*] It's a lie, you she-devil. I 'eard yer, I tell yer; and if I don't stop yer blarsted mouth for good and all this time I'm——

[*Catches up poker.*

Carrots. Easy, Bill. Keep your shirt in!

Tommy Long. 'Ands off the missus!

[*A few of the men crowd timidly round him, endeavouring to soothe him. He dashes through them with an oath and makes for* Mrs. BURGE, *upsetting tables in his way.*

Sam. [*In a wheedling voice.*] Now, I say, lookee 'ere, Bill——

Bill. Out o' the w'y, you 'aporth of rotten carrots.

[*Trips up* SAM CHEESEMAN *and flings him heavily to the ground.*

Canon. [*Feebly interposing.*] Come, come, my good man, this violence won't do here. You must control your——

[BILL BURGE *pushes him aside and rushes towards door* C., *on the* R. *of which his wife stands cowering. The crowd parts asunder, huddling together to get out of his way. Just as he is about to pass in front of the door it is suddenly thrown open, and a tall figure, wrapped in a fur coat, is seen standing, framed in the doorway against a background of darkness and driving snow. It is* Dr. TREGENNA. *He stands for a moment on the threshold, his eyes fixed intently on* BILL BURGE, *who remains as if petrified, with the poker raised above his head.*

Tregenna. [*Coolly.*] Good evening, Canon.

Canon. [*Agitated.*] My dear Tregenna, you come at the most fortunate moment.

Tregenna. So it seems. A patient of mine, to all appearance, and in a highly critical stage of his complaint too. [*He fixes his eyes steadfastly on* BURGE, *who sullenly and shrinkingly returns his gaze, the poker still half up-raised in his hand.*] But—excuse me, my man—you seem a little out of your bearings. The fireplace is over there. [*Points to it with a sudden gesture of command.* BURGE *gradually lowers the poker, slinks back to the fireplace, and resumes his former seat. A murmur of admiring astonishment from* Crowd. *Eyes his retreating figure for a few moments, and then, with a slight laugh and shrug of the shoulders, turns to the birdcage on* R. *of door.*] Aha! my tiny friend! still keeping the same unbirdlike hours, eh? Canon, you really ought to cover up this poor little wretch at night. He's getting quite a dissipated look. Well, little mite, as they *will* keep you up so late, I've brought you

your supper, as usual. Sweet! sweet! sweet! [*Takes piece of sugar from his pocket and introduces it between the bars. Then, after watching the bird a few moments longer, seats himself at table nearest platform.*] Hardly a favourable specimen of one of your "Happy Evenings for the People," this, eh, Canon?

Canon. No; but that fellow with the poker is not one of our regular guests. That's Bill Burge, I'm told—one of the most desperate ruffians in London, and this unhappy victim of his is——

Tregenna. [*Stopping him with a raised hand and a smile.*] My dear Canon, don't trouble to introduce us. A ruffian—a poker—and a woman: the situation proclaims the connection. How do you do, Mrs. Burge?

Mrs. B. [*In a depressed tone.*] Only middlin', thank you, sir. You see I don't 'ave a very rosy time of it with Bill there.

Tregenna. Not very rosy? No; so I should suppose. [*Looking at her contused eye.*] Black and blue seems more the colour-scheme, doesn't it?

Mrs. B. [*Carelessly.*] Oh, that? That's nothin'! I wish he never did no worse than that! 'Tain't his fists I'm afraid of—[*pressing her hand unconsciously on her side*]—it's his boots.

Tregenna. Ah, no doubt. And is he as ready with them as he is with his fists and the fire-irons?

Mrs. B. [*Slightly aggrieved.*] Law, no, sir! Bill ain't quite as sperited as that. Bill has always bashed me — special just before an attack of the 'orrors, and he's 'ad 'em three times now. When he's reg'lar down with them and sees rats and black beadles, I gets a little 'oliday. But now, sir, now, since his last fit of 'em—[*with a tremor in her voice*]—I've got to be more frightened of him after they've gone.

Tregenna. [*Suddenly interested and dropping his former*

tone of cynical indifference.] Eh? What's that? Say that again!

Mrs. B. [*Alarmed.*] Oh, don't speak so loud, sir. If Bill 'eard me tellin' tales out of school, as he calls it, he'd murder me.

Tregenna. [*Impatiently.*] Tut, tut, woman! Answer my questions.

Mrs. B. Well, he ain't done nothing yet since his last 'orrors till he broke out this afternoon. But—but—[*in an awed voice*]—he's *awful* to be with—talks to hisself at nights, and in the daytime sits for hours starin' at nothin', and sometimes don't seem to know me when I speak to him. And—and—[*with a catch in her breath*]—I feel when he's took like that I'd rather a 'undred times he'd begin 'ammerin' me again: it would seem more natural like. Oh, sir, can't you cure him?

[*Bursts into tears.*

Tregenna. [*Roughly.*] What's the woman blubbering about? Has he any delusions?

Mrs. B. [*Whimpering.*] Any what, sir?

Tregenna. Does he fancy things? Does he hear voices? Did he ever tell you that people were following him?

Mrs. B. [*Eagerly.*] Yes, yes! He said so only the day before yesterday, and——

Bill. [*Who has slouched unsteadily up to the group.*] 'Ere, there's enough of this jaw, missus. [*Looking suspiciously from one to the other.*] What's she been a-puttin' into you, guv'nor, about me?

Tregenna. [*With instantaneous change to geniality.*] My good Mr. Burge, why should an experienced doctor require anything to be put into him about you? You are suffering, Mr. Burge, from the malady of the age—over-excitement. You're quite in the fashion, I assure you.

Bill. What do you mean by——?

Tregenna. Let me prescribe for you. You want three months' complete rest from all business whatsoever, say at my little sanatorium, the Retreat, Hampstead. That's what I recommend. Nay—[*standing up and speaking with sudden emphasis*]—I order it. Excuse the peremptory word, a purely professional use of it, of course.

[*Their eyes meet and they remain gazing at each other for a few moments.*

Bill. [*Withdrawing his eyes from* Dr. TREGENNA'S *with a manifest effort.*] I'll be d——d if I do. I'll see you and your bloomin' sannytorium.—'Ere, come along, you. [*Seizing* Mrs. BURGE *roughly by the arm.*] I'll 'ave no more of this kiddin'. Come along, I say.

[*Flings out of the door, dragging his wife after him.*

Sam. [*Derisively.*] Ha! ha! Bill done him, yer see! Thort he would. Where's yer merrikles now, guv'nor?

Tregenna. [*Suddenly turning and facing him with an assumed air of sternness.*] What's that you're saying, you little rascal?

[SAM CHEESEMAN *flinches and appears inclined to slink off, when the* Canon *stops him.*

Canon. No, no, don't retire, Samuel.

[Crowd, *scenting fun in prospect, begin to gather round.*

Tommy Long. Buck up, Sammy!

Carrots. Gaw'n! Ain't his legs a-shikin'!

Joe Green. Buck up! Don't let 'em say you ain't gyme!

Sam. [*With an effort.*] Who says I ain't gyme? 'E may do as he likes with the pore blokes in his 'ome, but I ain't afraid of any of his larks 'ere.

Tregenna. [*Approaching him and speaking in solemn tones.*] What, sir, do you mean to tell me that you would

dare to commit the contents of that skull of yours to a scientific examination.

[*Produces a stethoscope from his coat pocket.*

Sam. [*Starting, but a moment afterwards reassured.*] Stow kiddin', guv'nor. That's the thing they tries your 'art with.

Tregenna. Your heart, Mr. Cheeseman, needs no trying. I believe it is an excellent one. What I have my doubts about is your head. Have you the courage to let that be tested? [*Sam visibly hesitates.*

Charley Tagg. Now then, Sammy.

Carrots. Blowed if he 'arf likes it.

Joe Green. Sit down, Sammy, and let the doctor try your chump.

[Sam *is forced unwillingly into a chair, where he is held down by two grinning friends.* Tregenna *gravely proceeds to apply the instrument to various points of the man's cranium, listening at the other end and mysteriously waving his unoccupied hand the while.* Sam *submitting with plainly increasing trepidation.*

Tregenna. [*Suddenly, and in a louder voice.*] Are you ready?

Tommy Long. Take care, Sammy. He's a-goin' to blow down it.

[Tregenna, *as if struck by the notion, makes as though he would do so.* Sam *bounds to his feet, upsetting the chair, and snatching up his cap, makes his exit, followed by the jeering crowd.* Tregenna *pockets the stethoscope and flings himself into a chair, with a dry cackling laugh.*

Canon. [*Half amused, half shocked.*] What pitiable ignorance. I wonder, Tregenna, that you have the heart to play upon it.

Tregenna. My dear Canon, would you have me give up

my profession? Besides, is ignorance so much more helpless in the East than in the West? If you can frighten it in Whitechapel with a stethoscope, you can terrify it in Mayfair with a Greek name for a new disease.

Canon. Well, Burge at any rate was not to be frightened. The man certainly seemed an eminently suitable subject for your treatment.

Tregenna. Suitable? I should think so. Quite an ideal case of incipient homicidal mania—quite ideal. [*Musingly.*] Quite ideal.

Canon. Still, after all, there seems more of the hungry tiger than the insane human about that wretch, and it is hardly surprising that your powers should not extend to the brute creation.

Tregenna. Oh, no. I have tamed many a human tiger as savage as Mr. Burge, though none, perhaps, with quite so huge and heavy a paw.

Canon. Ah, yes, but then I presume you managed to keep them within the influence of your presence. And this particular wild beast has escaped from the charmed circle.

Tregenna. [*After a pause—very quietly.*] Sometimes they return to it.

Canon. Return to it! How is that? [*Innocently.*] Oh, perhaps their wives persuade them.

Tregenna. Their wives? well, yes. [*With quiet irony.*] Perhaps it is their wives. When the tiger who has escaped into the jungle returns to you, apparently of his own accord, let us ascribe it to the gentle influence of his mate.

Canon. But do you expect to see *this* tiger back again?

Tregenna. [*Carelessly.*] Who knows?

Canon. What! When he has once got back to his jungle, as you call it. Do you know what that jungle is like?

Tregenna. I think so. Have I not just passed through it? Have I not traversed it a score of times on nights like this, till I know it as Dante knew that circle of his hell where the fire-flakes fell eternally as the snow is falling to-night? [*Goes to window and throws it open. The dull murmur of London is heard, and the snow is seen falling steadily without.* TREGENNA *leans on the sill of the window.*] The East End! It is our Inferno, Canon; and peopled with darker figures, swarming with ghastlier horrors, than the great poet ever dreamed or feigned. [*The shriek of a woman, followed by the fierce growl of a man's voice, is heard without.*] Do you hear the voices of the demons?—Listen!

[*The shriek is repeated, and dies away into a low wailing.*

Canon. Dear, dear! Yes, it's all very distressing.

Tregenna. Think of it and its miles of misery on a bitter winter night. Think of its wretched multitudes writhing between the double fangs of frost and want; hunger crouching by its black and empty grate; drunkenness gathering in its recruits of cold; vice perishing at its roadside trade, and only crime paralysed into harmlessness, like a frozen snake. Think of the sorrows of our Inferno. [*An organ strikes up a waltz tune in the distance.*] And think of its joys. Which are the more lamentable? Ah! [*With a sweep of his arm round him.*] What, in God's name, is life worth to these? What—[*abruptly restraining himself*]—but you are quite right, Canon; our jungle, as we have called it, is in reality a hell from which few of its victims can extricate themselves on mere invitation.

Canon. [*With a sigh.*] Ah, yes, doctor; it is a terrible problem, the condition of our East End poor. So much the more is it the duty of those who enjoy the cultured

charm and repose of our West End life to do what in them lies to alleviate the lot of——

Tregenna. [*Sardonically.*] What in them lies. And what does lie in them? As much as lies in one mortally sick man to cure another. My good friend, the West End square and the East End rookery are both wards of the same hospital.

Canon. [*Startled.*] God bless me. You mean that——

Tregenna. [*With sinister meaning.*] I mean that I seek my subjects—I should say my patients—with perfect impartiality among poor and rich, and that the rich supply me with as many, nay, with more than the poor.

Canon. [*Weakly.*] True, true! The rich have their troubles.

Tregenna. [*Sternly.*] Ay, and they are as good food for science too. And science is merciless——

Canon. You mean merciful, doctor?

Tregenna. Yes, yes; I see you understand me.

[*Rises and walks to the fireplace, where he stands for a moment resting his arm on the mantelpiece, then seats himself and lapses into a profound reverie.*

Canon. Perfectly, perfectly; and not the least among the troubles of the rich are those of which you, doctor, see most—those mysterious brain diseases which are so terribly rife in these days. I know of a most distressing case of the kind in the family of my very dear friend, Lord Belhurst. Do you know him? His daughter, a beautiful creature, and engaged to be married to the new Victoria Cross hero, Colonel Anson, of Afridi fame, who is on his way home—and now we fear that she—[*looking up and noticing* TREGENNA'S *abstraction*]—ah, he is not listening. Pondering some scientific problem, I suppose. [*Looks at his watch.*] Ten

o'clock. I mustn't burn gas at this rate. Charity must be economical. [*Bustles fussily about the room, lowering the gas, arranging the tables for the night, etc. Pauses for a moment in reflection.*] Oh! and my subscription book — I was nearly forgetting to lock up my subscription book. [*Takes book off reading-desk.*] I will be back in a moment, Doctor. [*Noticing* TREGENNA'S *abstracted air.*] What? Still waiting for your tiger to return? Ha, ha! [*Walks to window and looks out. Sound of wind moaning without. Closing window.*] Really, I don't think you need expect him. The night's cold enough to kill not merely a tiger but a wolf. Ha, ha!

[*Laughs foolishly and exit. A silence broken only by the dropping of the coals, and the faint sound of the wind outside.* TREGENNA *continues to sit in the same dreaming attitude before the fire, its light playing upon his haggard face. The latch of the door is gently lifted; the door opens, and* BILL BURGE, *stepping stealthily into the room, stands for a few moments irresolute, and then slowly approaches the fireplace till he stands within the circle of the light.* TREGENNA *looks up and sees* BURGE *standing before him. At this moment* Canon SLADE-SMITH *re-enters, and starts back in astonishment.*

Tregenna. [*Quietly.*] You see, my tiger has returned from the jungle after all!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Three Weeks Later.

Scene.—*Lord Belhurst's house in Mayfair. A large conservatory stocked with choice flowers, towering palms, etc., and furnished with seats, lounges, small tables, and so forth, after the fashion of a winter garden. At back is seen one end of a brilliantly lighted ball-room opening into the conservatory, from which it is divided only by a couple of marble columns. Curtain drawing up.*

[*Discovers* Mrs. Culling *and* Lady Agatha Warrington *seated on settee to right of stage. A waltz is in progress, the music of which is faintly heard from the further end of the ball-room throughout the conversation. At frequent intervals some couple or other straying beyond the strict limits of the dancing floor, waltz round one of the two columns and twirl their way back into the ball-room.*

Lady A. Delightfully cool here, isn't it?

Mrs. C. It is; but I don't myself much like sitting in a conservatory at a ball. You feel so much in the way.

Lady A. What, here? Not in the way of the dancers, surely?

Mrs. C. No, of the couples who don't want to dance. We have already scared away quite half a dozen girls who wanted to "sit out" with ineligible young

men. It makes one feel like a sort of universal chaperon; and nothing ages one so rapidly as feeling universal.

[Mr. WARRINGTON *waltzes round one of the columns with the exaggerated strenuousness of a middle-aged man mated with a youthful partner.*

How well Mr. Warrington waltzes!

Lady A. [*Incredulously.*] Well?

Mrs. C. Well, let us say—how energetically.

Lady A. [*Frigidly.*] He usually chooses the most youthful and active partner he can find, and as they don't know how stiff he is in the knees the next morning, they think him quite young—for his age.

[Sir CLEMENT HOPE *and* Miss DORA BELL *waltz round the column.*

Mrs. C. Mr. Warrington won't suffer from his exertions as that young giant will, or, at any rate, as he will tell you he does, to-morrow morning.

Lady A. Sir Clement Hope, why, what's the matter with him?

Mrs. C. Fifteen stone of shattered nerves, my dear, according to his own account. And six feet of anæmia. All our smart young men are at death's door nowadays —when they are not at the other door.

Lady A. The other door?

Mrs. C. The stage door, my dear!

Lady A. Who is the girl dancing with him?

Mrs. C. Oh, that's Dora Bell. A niece of Canon Slade-Smith. Of course the Canon is a celibate. Still he's good-natured, and allows himself the liberty of being an uncle now and then.

Lady A. Let me see, didn't Dora Bell have a call to nursing some two years or so ago?

Mrs. C. She did indeed. A call that took her all the way to South Africa.

Lady A. Curious, how many girls seem to be drawn towards that vocation nowadays after two or three London seasons! I suppose they find out the hollowness of the world.

Mrs. C. Yes, dear, and the backwardness of men. I have known several nurses make highly successful marriages. Kitty Vereker, who was quite on the shelf, got off most successfully when she took to looking after dipsomaniacs. And Lady Hinchcliffe's daughter—the one with the glass eye, who was a confirmed spinster—went into a small-pox hospital; and is now a happy widow.

Lady A. And has Miss Bell——

Mrs. C. Oh, Dora seems to have heard an inward voice summoning her to Johannesburg to cool the fevered brow of a South African millionaire.

Lady A. And did she cool it?

Mrs. C. No. I understand that she found so many other young women out there, vowed to the same holy mission, that she came home again by the next mail.

[Colonel ANSON *and* Partner *waltz round the column.*

Mrs. C. Ah, here he is! [Lady AGATHA *looks inquiringly at her.*] Don't you know him? It's our Indian hero, Sylvia's *fiancé*, Colonel Anson, V. C. and all the rest of it—just returned red-handed from the slaughter of Afridis. It is, my dear! Don't be deceived by his white kid gloves.

Lady A. Indeed! I should never have thought it.

Mrs. C. Why not? Did you expect him to come in waving a sword?

Enter Sir CLEMENT HOPE *and* DORA BELL *promenading. She has taken his arm in the usual way, but she has a protecting air which would almost suggest that he had taken hers.*

Dora. I do think this is such a charming waltz. It tempts me to go on longer than is prudent. I *hope* [*anxiously*] you have not over-exerted yourself?

Sir C. [*Feebly.*] I shall be a wreck to-morrow, Miss Bell, simply an absolute wreck.

Dora. Dear! dear! how sad! I know you *are* such a sufferer. [*They seat themselves on settee to left of stage.*] I am afraid I was inconsiderate in consenting to that last turn. One moment! [*Soothingly.*] There!

[*Applies vinaigrette of lavender salts to* Sir CLEMENT'S *nostril.*

Sir C. [*Slightly recovering.*] The last turn? Oh, pray don't reproach yourself. Merely coming to this dance will prostrate me for a week.

Dora. It is really most distressing! What a dreadful thing this hyperæsthesia of the nerves seems to be.

Sir C. [*Despondingly.*] Good gracious me, Miss Bell, how learned you are!

Dora. [*Shaking her head.*] Ah, no, Sir Clement; we poor nurses have to pick up medical knowledge how we can. One would despair indeed if it were not for one support which can never fail us—the interest in one's patients.

Sir C. [*Slightly alarmed.*] Shall we have another turn?

Dora. Another turn? Not for worlds! How *could* you think of such a thing in your condition? No, no,

Sir Clement. [*Holding up her fingers archly.*] Remember, I am your doctor for the present, and you must let me prescribe for you: I am going to take you to the supper-room and give you just half-a-glass of champagne and a spoonful or two of chicken jelly.

Lady A. Doctor Rainham's looking wonderfully well.

Mrs. C. Doctors never doctor themselves. But it's a shame to joke about him. He's worth a hundred of the man who has put his nose out of joint.

Lady A. You are no believer in the great Tregenna?

Mrs. C. Not I, though I am quite out of the fashion, I know. I like the old style of doctor, who felt your pulse, looked at your tongue, told you all the current gossip, which you believed or not as you liked, and wrote you a prescription, which you took or not as you chose.

Lady A. Exactly. But suppose you did take it?

Mrs. C. Well, then it was your own fault if you recovered and got behindhand with the latest scandal.

Lady A. Then you really think there's nothing in Dr. Tregenna's system in the modern mental treatment of disease?

Mrs. C. On the contrary, my dear Agatha, I think there's a great deal in it. There's superstition in it, there's hysteria in it, and I am inclined to think there's a good deal of flirtation in it, too.

Lady A. But you can't deny that he has made some wonderful cures. Don't you remember poor young Lawrence Vyner, who showed such distinct signs of derangement a year or two ago? He went for three months to the Doctor's Hampstead Retreat; and within a month after leaving it he got married.

Mrs. C. Indeed! Convalescence or relapse?

Lady A. Well, dear, at any rate he has shown no other signs of mental weakness.

Enter Canon SLADE-SMITH *and* Doctor RAINHAM.

Ah, here's the dear Canon. I *am* glad. Now I shall have one supporter at any rate.

Mrs. C. We were just talking of the curious—can I call them medical?—methods of Dr. Tregenna. Do you believe in them, Dr. Rainham?

[Colonel ANSON *and* Mr. WARRINGTON *come up at this point and join the group.*

Dr. R. To Tregenna's methods I am too old, or perhaps too prejudiced, to become a convert; but on his own belief in them I would stake my life.

Mrs. C. [*To* Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON.] And this of the man who has quite cut him out as a doctor! Isn't he a dear fellow?

Canon. Well, Tregenna has made one very influential convert, and that quite recently.

Col. A. [*Interested.*] Indeed! Who is that?

Canon. Lord Belhurst. He expressed to me a strong desire to make the Doctor's acquaintance, and Tregenna is to be here to-night.

Dr. R. Tregenna! At a ball?

Mr. W. By Jove! Canon, you surprise me. I thought he was a chap who shut himself up in his cell like one of those—one of those early Christian Johnnies, don't you know. St. Anthony, eh?

Dr. R. Yes, Tregenna hates Society.

Canon. All the time he can spare from his profession he devotes to good works at the East End.

Mrs. C. Is it possible that he can have some good work in view at the West End? Or are we beyond the reach of help—the submerged upper crust? But unless it is that, I really can't imagine——

[Lord BELHURST *has approached during* Mrs. CULLING'S *utterance of her last sentence, and*

addressed her with a certain grim politeness, but with a visibly anxious and pre-occupied manner.

Lord B. Not even you, Mrs. Culling? Then why tax that brilliant imagination further? Surely the busiest and most devoted of physicians may occasionally feel the need of amusement, and if I have chanced to find Dr. Tregenna in that mood, it may be a stroke of good luck, but hardly a miracle. But perhaps he has already arrived. I am at this moment on the way to inquire.

Lady A. Oh, let me go with you, Lord Belhurst.

Lord B. I feel almost sure that Tregenna must have arrived by now.

Canon. He is the most punctual of men. [*Exeunt.*

[Dr. RAINHAM *and* Mrs. CULLING *retire to side of scene, and seat themselves on sofa in earnest conversation.*

Enter Hon. Miss DRAKE *and* Mr. BRAYBROOK.

Miss D. [*Petulantly.*] You aren't agile, Mr. Vining; an agile man would have got me in to supper.

Mr. B. I am most concerned—by—really—the crowd, Miss Drake——

Miss D. Go to Sandow's School.

Mr. B. Does he teach you to find two places when there isn't one?

Miss D. He'll teach you how to develop your muscles, and muscular development is vitally necessary for those who have to make their way in London Society.

Enter Lady MARY MAYNE *and* Captain STOPTON.

Lady M. I like serious people; as a background at a ball they give such an effect of contrast!

Capt. S. A row of chaperons at two o'clock in the morning, for instance!

Lady M. Yes, indeed. Most artistic in their double-chinned despair!

[*Exeunt.* Doctor RAINHAM *and* Partner *waltz round column.*

Enter DORA BELL, *with* Sir CLEMENT HOPE.

Dora. [*Tenderly.*] You feel better?

Sir Clement. I think if you had allowed me to venture on a morsel of something solid, I——

Dora. But jelly is so bracing.

[*Exeunt* DORA *and* Sir CLEMENT.

[*As they go off,* Lord BELHURST *appears at back as if looking for some one. He comes a short way down stage anxiously, hesitates, then turns towards ball-room and exit.* Mrs. CULLING *watching him.*

Mrs. C. Dr. Rainham!

Dr. R. Mrs. Culling!

Mrs. C. As a doctor it's your business to know what's the matter with everybody?

Dr. R. Pardon me, it's my business to say what's the matter with everybody—for a consideration.

Mrs. C. Then say what's the matter with Lord Belhurst, and I'll owe you a guinea.

Dr. R. Lord Belhurst?

Mrs. C. Yes, Lord Belhurst; because I, giving advice gratis, as becomes an unqualified practitioner, feel perfectly sure that if ever there was a case for calling in——

Enter Dr. TREGENNA.

Oh, talk of the devil, and—so glad to see you, Dr. Tregenna. This is indeed an unexpected pleasure—

[*They shake hands.*

Tregenna. [*Turning with genuine cordiality to her*

companion.] How are you, my dear Rainham? It seems an age since we met.

Mrs. C. How can you wonder at it, when you never condescend, as Dr. Rainham does, to mix with us weak-minded triflers? But perhaps you think we shall all have to come to see you ourselves in course of time.

Tregenna. [*Smiling.*] Not quite all, Mrs. Culling, some of you are safe enough.

Mrs. C. Including me by chance.

Tregenna. [*Still smiling.*] I didn't say so.

Mrs. C. Oh, but I do hope you will. Am I really quite safe?

Tregenna. I can't say that exactly, with the words of a famous poet in my mind.

Mrs. C. Which are?

Tregenna. [*Bowing in a courtly fashion.*]

> "Great wits to madness, sure, are near allied,
> And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

Mrs. C. [*With a mock curtsey.*] Thank you, Dr. Tregenna. What a very pretty speech. I'm sure you must be dying for a talk with your old friend here; so I'll run away before you have time to reconsider my case.

Tregenna. [*Stopping her with a gesture.*] Shall I give you a prescription before you go?

Mrs. C. Something mental? I think I'd rather not. I'm old-fashioned, Dr. Tregenna, and would rather trust my fate to a pill, or place my hopes of happiness on a mixture, than give my mind to anybody's keeping—even yours! [*Exit.*

Tregenna. A very sensible woman.

Dr. R. [*With a smile.*] So at last the hermit has come out of his cell.

Tregenna. [*Coldly.*] A doctor must go where he is called.

Dr. R. Come, Tregenna, who is the Helen of this fair company that——

Tregenna. [*With a slight start, then grimly.*] Helen! You are unlucky in your names, Rainham. I was fool enough once to give my heart into the keeping of a woman who bore that name.

Dr. R. [*Moved, and laying hand on* Dr. TREGENNA'S *shoulder.*] I know. But after all, the sad story has a less melancholy sequel. The misfortune, or the wrong, that shattered your happiness laid the foundation of your fame. [*Sits.*

Tregenna. [*With renewed bitterness.*] Yes, if you mean that it drove me to work which, in making me forget that I was miserable, has made me—[*in a lower tone*]—forget also that I am a man. Yes, if you mean that I am prosperous, successful. But what of that?

Dr. R. [*In a kindly, cheering voice.*] Surely it is something to be thankful for that this trouble has increased your power of benefiting mankind.

Tregenna. [*With intense scorn.*] Mankind! Mankind! Why, the word has no meaning for me; has not had for five-and-twenty years.

Dr. R. But surely you have found happiness in your labours—in your successes?

Tregenna. Happiness! No, unless stupefaction is happiness. What have my labours, what have my successes been but the narcotic drugs that have won for me forgetfulness! Forgetfulness? [*Rises.*] Why, even now there are moments when I feel that I could fling power and fame and triumph to the winds for one dagger-thrust at the heart of the man who robbed me.

Dr. R. [*Horrified.*] Tregenna!

Tregenna. [*Bursting into a sardonic laugh.*] His heart did I say? What an old-fashioned organ to attack. It

is not the body I should strike if I sought revenge for an injury, but the mind.

Dr. R. Revenge?

Tregenna. [*Changing to a careless tone.*] Ay, *if* I sought revenge. He who can cure disease for a good purpose could cause it for an evil one.

Dr. R. [*Eyeing him curiously.*] What, you really believe that your methods are as potent as that? You fancy that by force of your will-power, as you call it, you can——

Tregenna. Fancy it? I *know* it! I have proved it.

Dr. R. [*Startled.*] Proved it?

Tregenna. I mean I could prove it in that way were I allowed to do so. What, shocked? I tell you, Rainham, [*with growing excitement*] that if we treated criminals in this country as we do not scruple to treat rabbits, I would rid the world, before I die, of the deadliest and most terrible scourge of man.

Dr. R. That is if criminals fared no better with us than rabbits. But your East End patients supply you with a sufficient variety of cases.

Tregenna. [*Contemptuously.*] Oh, my East End patients! Yes, for the simpler, cruder forms of insanity —for the brain trouble that is born of violence and brutality. But the descent of madness from the delirium of the drunkard, from the bestial fury of the wife-beater, from savagery and ruffianism in every form, is plain enough without the help of their examples. [*Pacing the stage as though unconscious of* Dr. RAINHAM'S *presence.*] Oh, for a patient that I could follow step by step along that gloomy path till we reached the actual border line, the dim, yet still visible frontier beyond which insanity lies. All—all would be clear to me then! But that is the one case that I have never met with, which, perhaps, I never shall meet with—unless—[*apart and speaking to*

himself]—unless——[SYLVIA *passes at back from the ball-room to the conservatory, leaning on* Colonel ANSON'S *arm.*] Great God! It is Helen herself—my Helen—come back from the grave!

Dr. R. [*Astonished.*] Helen! *your* Helen! Tregenna, what do you mean?

Tregenna. [*Grasping* Dr. RAINHAM'S *arm and pointing after* SYLVIA.] Who is she? Who is she?

Dr. R. Lord Belhurst's daughter.

Tregenna. Good God! Whose house am I in? Her name, Rainham? Quick! Her name?

Dr. R. Sylvia—Sylvia Wynford.

Tregenna. Wynford, did you say? Wynford! Ah, then, that explains the likeness. That living image of Helen is Helen's daughter—[*after a moment's pause*]—and *his.*

Dr. R. Then the man who five years ago became Lord Belhurst, is the man who——

Tregenna. The man who robbed me—the man who wrecked my life.

Enter Lord BELHURST.

Lord B. Dr. Tregenna, I believe?

[TREGENNA *turns, his face resuming its habitual severity of expression. He eyes* Lord BELHURST *with a certain stern curiosity, and shakes hands in a formal manner.*

Dr. R. Well, Lord Belhurst, I know you have serious business together; so I will leave you. [*Exit.*

Lord B. I sincerely thank you, Dr. Tregenna, for having broken your rule of seclusion in my favour. [TREGENNA *bows coldly.*] This is a somewhat strange scene for a consultation, but [*indicating seat. They sit*] my excuse for choosing it can be explained in a moment.

Tregenna. Yes?

Lord B. I want you to see a—a possible future patient under these circumstances—in an hour of gaiety, brightness——

Tregenna. A patient?

Lord B. My daughter. [*Movement of* TREGENNA.] I have some fears, possibly groundless, for her health. [TREGENNA *listening in silence.*] I may be fanciful—you will say.

Tregenna. I cannot tell.

Lord B. No, no, of course you have not seen her. [SYLVIA *passes at back with partner.* LORD BELHURST *lays his hand hastily on* TREGENNA'S *arm.*] Ah, there she is! Look—look at her! [TREGENNA *turns coldly to look after* SYLVIA, *who passes on and exits.* LORD BELHURST *watching him anxiously.*] What should you say to that? The picture of happiness, eh?

Tregenna. She looks happy!

Lord B. So did her mother. [*Hesitating.*

Tregenna. Her mother?

Lord B. Yes, and who fell a victim to some mysterious mental malady a few months before Sylvia—my daughter—was born, and my constant fear is that my daughter may have inherited her fatal tendency.

Tregenna. [SYLVIA *seen at back.*] Your daughter is coming this way.

Lord B. Yes, yes; my fears may be mere fancies—judge for yourself. I had perhaps better not let her see me talking with you. She might suspect.

[*Exit* LORD BELHURST.

Tregenna. If *she* should be that patient for whom I have waited so long! Helen's daughter, Helen's echo in face, in bearing. At least the mask and domino are beautiful—beautiful as were her mother's.

[Dr. TREGENNA *withdraws to back of scene and takes a seat among the palms, from which, concealed himself, he can watch the couple.*

Enter SYLVIA *and* Colonel ANSON; *he leads her to a seat and sits down beside her.*

Col. A. [*Anxiously.*] Why, what's the matter, Sylvia? You are tired—you are ill.

Sylvia. [*Faintly.*] No, no, Maurice, it is nothing. My head swims a little, that's all. Everything seems dreamlike. I can hardly believe that you are back again—by my side once more. Oh, Maurice, that awful time of waiting; they haunted me, those dreadful, dreadful telegrams.

[*Shuddering and covering her eyes with her hands.*

Col. A. [*Soothingly.*] Oh, come, come, Sylvia, it wasn't as bad as all that, you know. Those newspaper chaps are bound to paint things up a bit.

Sylvia. How can you talk so lightly of it? "Newspaper chaps" don't get soldiers the Victoria Cross.

Col. A. [*Smiling.*] I'm not so sure of that.

Sylvia. [*Looking proudly at him.*] I am, Maurice. Valour alone can win that cross inscribed with those words that lie in my heart—"For Valour." When I saw your name in the *Gazette*, I forgot everything: all my sleepless nights—everything, in my joy and pride in my hero. [Colonel ANSON *takes her hands in his.*] And when you put that little cross into my hand it burned me like the flame of your courage. As I touched it, I saw the deed that won it; I heard the bullets hiss round you.

[*Breaking off.*

Col. A. [*Drawing her towards him.*] Dearest Sylvia!

[TREGENNA *coughs slightly, and advances. They start and release each other.*

Tregenna. [*Coming forward and addressing* SYLVIA.] May I introduce myself? Dr. Tregenna.

Sylvia. [*Surprised.*] Dr. Tregenna! Oh, where is my father? He is so anxious to see you.

Tregenna. I have already seen him, Miss Wynford.

Sylvia. Then I hope his mind is at rest. His impatience for your coming was quite—quite—

Tregenna. Absurd, you were going to say?

Sylvia. Absurd—no, pathetic! But when everybody is impatient to see what so few people have ever had the chance of seeing—Dr. Tregenna in a ball-room—

Tregenna. An odd spectacle, you think—like a fly in amber.

Sylvia. Perhaps; for you know, Dr. Tregenna, men must live up to their reputation.

Tregenna. And what about women?

Sylvia. Oh! we only have to live up to our dress-makers; that takes us all our time.

Col. A. Not you, Sylvia.

Sylvia. Oh, Maurice, let me introduce you—Colonel Anson—Dr. Tregenna.

[Col. ANSON *and* Dr. TREGENNA *bow coldly.*

[*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] But do tell me—why have you condescended to come? To dance the Cotillon with me? Do you wish to be wiped out of my mirror?

[*Holding up a little silver mirror that hangs at her side.*

Tregenna. [*More seriously.*] Your father had a special reason for desiring my presence here to-night.

Sylvia. [*More serious.*] Yes?

Tregenna. He was anxious that I should make your acquaintance. [*Fixes his eyes intently on her.*

Sylvia. [*In a slightly abstracted voice.*] Was he? I am so glad.

Tregenna. [*Quietly, but in a slow, measured tone, and*

with marked emphasis.] And I believe he thought — forgive my boldness, at my age one may say what would be an impertinence in a younger man — I believe he thought that we should have a mutual attraction for each other.

Col. A. [*Who has watched the interview thus far with an air of uneasy distrust, aside.*] Oh, confound the fellow! This is too much. [*Aloud.*] Did Lord Belhurst authorise you to say that, Dr. Tregenna?

Tregenna. [*Sternly, removing his eyes for a moment from* SYLVIA.] No, sir; but neither did he instruct me to request your permission.

Col. A. [*Hotly.*] Because it strikes me that on so short an acquaintance ——

Sylvia. Maurice dear, we are not on the battle-field. Dr. Tregenna is quite right. We are beginning to understand one another already. Besides [*music*] this is your dance with Miss Bell. There's the music beginning.

Col. A. [*Drawing her a little aside from* Dr. TREGENNA *and speaking in low, earnest tones.*] Beware of that man, Sylvia.

Sylvia. Miss Bell's dance!

Col. A. Beware of him, I entreat you!

Sylvia. Miss Bell's dance! Don't you understand, dear? [Colonel ANSON *catches her hand, kisses it, and exit. Sylvia looking after him.*] What ridiculous creatures men are!

Tregenna. All men?

Sylvia. [*Turning and meeting his eyes.*] All, when you know their weak point. [*Sitting.*] What is yours, Dr. Tregenna?

Tregenna. [*Sitting.*] My foolish good nature.

Sylvia. I should scarcely have thought so, you have not the face of what I call the tea-party man.

Tregenna. The tea-party man ?

Sylvia. Yes. The sort of nice, indefinite, cotton-wool man, who smirks at you over a muffin and waves his handkerchief [*business*] at life, and thinks that art can only live in Paris and that women can only live in London. [*Laughing.*

Tregenna. I haven't got his face, eh ?

Sylvia. No, you're not half so pretty-pretty !

Tregenna. Perhaps I wear a mask—as you do.

Sylvia. I wear a mask ! My dear Doctor, we're not at Covent Garden ! You're forgetting——

Tregenna. Nothing ! Your mask is painted with a smile.

Sylvia. [*Smiling.*] It is indeed—my best ball-room smile.

Tregenna. Mine—look into your little mirror—[SYLVIA *holds it up before her.* Dr. TREGENNA *rises and stands behind her, bending slightly towards the mirror, into which* SYLVIA *gazes*]—mine is painted with a frown.

[*Facial business.*

Sylvia. [*Starting.*] Ah ! [*Recovering.*] You change your mask at will, it seems.

Tregenna. And can even wear a gay one when I please, like the tea-party man. [*Facial business.*

Sylvia [*Still looking into mirror, half amused, half frightened.*] What ? You vary your colour like the chameleon !

Tregenna. At will I can wear the mask [*facial business*]. Of hate [*facial business*] when it sees its enemy ! Of love [*facial business*] when it sees——

Sylvia. [*Dropping the mirror and turning to him.*] Yes, when love sees——?

Tregenna. A lovely woman.

Sylvia. Ah ! Take care of the tea-party man. You nearly said [*mimicry*] Dear Lady !

Tregenna. No, no.

Sylvia. You trembled on the verge! But your own face, Dr. Tregenna, what is that like? Should I be able to recognize you if I surprised you without your mask?

Tregenna. [*Very serious tone.*] I will ask you a question, Miss Wynford. Should I be able to recognise you?

Sylvia. [*Catching his gravity.*] Yes, at any time, for I am always myself.

Tregenna. But are there not many women in one woman?

Sylvia. [*Growing gravity.*] Would you say so? Are we like the conjurer's boxes—a hundred in one?

Tregenna. Are you not? Why you—you are the laughing woman you were, the serious woman you are, the sad, the shadowed woman you can be.

Sylvia. [*Falteringly.*] You—do you know that—that sometimes I seem to be walking with shadows?

Tregenna. With shadows—yes!

Sylvia. They come to me when I am alone, and make me sad. They whisper to me of sorrows, until I feel as if the sorrows were in my own heart.

Tregenna. Do they come at night?

Sylvia. Sometimes. [*Trying to throw off her gloom of spirit ineffectually.*] In summer time I often think that they come trooping down to me from the moon. As I look out of my window over our dark, murmuring woods at Belhurst. I listen—listen till I can almost hear their soft footsteps.

Tregenna. [*Voice to induce sleep.*] And then, as the night grows old, you hear the shadows singing—singing their drowsy melodies.

Sylvia. [*With drawn voice.*] Yes, their drowsy melodies.

Tregenna. To lull you and your sorrowful heart to sleep—to sleep?

Sylvia. To sleep. Yes!

Tregenna. [*Sharp change.*] Till the sun comes out of the east, and it's—morning.

Sylvia. [*Starting up, bewildered expression.*] Why, why, Dr. Tregenna, the shadows are gone! But it's you—you who have driven them away.

Tregenna. [*Rising abruptly.*] Enough for the present, Miss Wynford. We will talk again together some other time. See, here is your father and your excited lover come to claim you.

Enter Lord BELHURST *and* Colonel ANSON.

Col. A. Sylvia, come with me. [*Indicating ball-room.*]

Sylvia. [*Still as if bewildered.*] But, Maurice, I——

[*Looking towards* Dr. TREGENNA.

Tregenna. The Cotillon, Miss Wynford, the Cotillon! Life has its flowers and favours as well as its shadows.

Sylvia. [*Regaining her gaiety.*] And its mirrors. If you approach me in the mirror figure, doctor, I shall take my handkerchief and wipe out all your masks: I won't have even one.

Tregenna. Not the last?

Sylvia. Not even that.

Col. A. Masks! What do you mean?

Sylvia. Never mind, Maurice. You don't know anything about masks.

Col. A. No, thank God, I don't.

[*Exeunt* Colonel ANSON *and* SYLVIA.

Lord B. [*Anxiously.*] Well, Dr. Tregenna, you have seen my daughter—you have talked with her!

Tregenna. [*Gravely.*] Yes, I have.

Lord B. And my fears for her health of mind, they are without foundation? Can you tell me that?

Tregenna. Unfortunately there is some ground for alarm. Miss Wynford is exceptionally, even morbidly

impressionable, highly strung beyond the average woman.

Lord B. I feared so.

Tregenna. [*Always watching him.*] She needs the greatest care.

Lord B. You mean medical care?

Tregenna. I do. I should advise you to remove Miss Wynford for a time from all excitement, and give her perfect rest and quiet.

Lord B. I will take her down to Belhurst.

Tregenna. I would not do that, the woods, the memories of the place might foster her habits of melancholy.

Lord B. Would it be possible for you to undertake her case yourself?

Tregenna. No, quite impossible.

Lord B. Impossible for you to give up your time?

Tregenna. I have undertaken responsibilities with regard to others that I may not neglect.

Lord B. Unfortunate, most unfortunate. To whom then can I trust her?

Tregenna. That's for you to consider.

[*Pause, looking at each other.*

Lord B. Could we arrange in no way that you should fulfil your other duties and at the same time give my daughter your earnest care?

Tregenna. Well, there might be one way—yes—I might accomplish that—at Hampstead, perhaps I might be able to secure the perfect quiet and constant watching which her health would require.

Lord B. At Hampstead? The Retreat? Is it not called so? You think that course would be best?

Tregenna. I think that there Miss Wynford might be removed from all existing conditions.

Lord B. I am greatly indebted to you, Dr. Tregenna.

It is of course a—a—difficult step for me to take. Still her restoration——

Tregenna. Might probably be accomplished *under those circumstances.*

Lord B. Then I ought not—I will not hesitate.

Tregenna. [*Smiles quietly.*]

Lord B. I depend then on your skill for my poor child.

Tregenna. I will devote my whole power to her case, Lord Belhurst. You may rely on that.

Lord B. I do thank you, Dr. Tregenna, with all my heart I thank you, and place my daughter in your hands. There's the Canon. [*Exit.*

Tregenna. [*Courteous deprecation.*]

Enter Canon SLADE-SMITH.

Canon. Has Lord Belhurst taken my advice?

Tregenna. What advice?

Canon. Why, I strongly urged him to consult you as to the possibility of Miss Wynford staying at Hampstead for a little. I am sure that after the London season it would be of the greatest benefit to her. It would be better than going abroad, wouldn't it? I knew her poor mother, you know.

Tregenna. [*Eyeing him with a curious expression.*] *You* urged that, Canon?

Canon. [*Pluming himself.*] Surely, surely.

Tregenna. Ah, always untiring in efforts for the welfare of others. Yes, your advice has been taken. Miss Wynford will soon become a fellow patient with Bill Burge.

Canon. She is ill then?

Tregenna. She may become so.

Canon. You will prevent it? You are the very man to save her.

Tregenna. [*Sardonically.*] I! You think that, Canon? Ah! You always have so much penetration.

Canon. Oh, nothing out of the way, Tregenna. Besides, everything is possible to a will like yours.

Tregenna. [*Half to himself.*] Yes, everything. Even such things as you, Canon, would little dream of.

Enter Mrs. CULLING, Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON, DORA BELL *and* Lady MARY MAYNE *and* Captain STOPTON.

Canon. Ah! here comes our dear Dora! Allow me to make known to you, my niece, Miss Bell—Miss Dora Bell, a young woman, I am glad to say, with a serious purpose. [TREGENNA *bows with cold politeness.*

Mrs. C. [*To* Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON.] It's getting more than serious—it's becoming desperate.

Canon. Dora is a fully qualified nurse, and is eagerly desirous of obtaining employment in that capacity. Is it not so, dear Lady Agatha?

Lady A. It is indeed, dear Canon Slade-Smith. I think it is so sweet of them, don't you, dear Mrs. Culling?

Canon. [*Unctuously.*] And surely it should be full of encouragement to us all, that so many young women born to luxury and ease should be willing to put away the rich apparel of their class to don the simple garb of charity.

Mrs. C. [*To* Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON.] White cap, white bibbed apron, collar and cuffs to match, all of the finest lawn. It suits some girls remarkably well.

Tregenna. [*Who has been closely scrutinizing* DORA BELL *during the preceding conversation.*] Does Miss Bell propose to enter a hospital or to take up private nursing?

Dora. Oh, not a hospital, Dr. Tregenna. I would much

rather attach myself to one particular patient. It seems to offer so many more opportunities for—for——

Mrs. C. For personal self-devotion.

Canon. And it has therefore occurred to Dora, my dear Tregenna, that if, through my good offices, she could obtain a post as nurse in your Hampstead Retreat.

Tregenna. A post as nurse in my retreat? Is Miss Bell aware of the painful nature of the maladies from which my patients suffer?

Mrs. C. Oh! yes; from what I know of Dora, I feel sure she would have no objection to nursing a weak-minded young man——

Dora. [*Ignoring the remark.*] Ah, no, Dr. Tregenna, I have seen so much of brain trouble in my own class of life.

Tregenna. In your own class of life, eh? [*Then, after a moment's reflection and with a sardonic smile.*] Ah, I think I can provide you with a patient, if you are ready to commence your duties at once—say to-morrow or the next day.

Dora. [*Eagerly.*] I am, I am! A thousand thanks, Dr. Tregenna, I must think of my preparations. Dancing seems so frivolous when there is suffering all around us. Oh! [*Rapturously.*] I wonder what *he* is like! Mr. Warrington, will you come with me till I get my cloak? [*Exeunt.*

Canon. Dora's zeal is most creditable to her. But, thank heaven, it is only one of many signs of awakening among the members of what was once I fear a selfish class.

Mrs. C. But come now, Dr. Tregenna, tell us, have you really secured a duke for Dora?

Tregenna. Well, no, Mrs. Culling, not exactly a duke; but there's no deceiving you, Mrs. Culling, so I may as well reveal my little plot at once. Miss Bell is to take charge of a very powerful and very violent dock labourer

who is already displaying marked symptoms of homicidal mania.

Mrs. C. Oh, Dr Tregenna! How can you? Poor dear Miss Bell! But is it safe? Dock labourers are so very —unconventional—even when they are sane.

Tregenna. In my house, perfectly so. I will explain to you. [*They go off, talking confidentially.*

Canon. Tregenna! Tregenna! You mustn't run away. I am not going to let you go until you and my very dear friend the Archdeacon of Poplar have made each other's acquaintance. Come along, you are my captive for the present.

Tregenna. Pardon me; for the present I am Mrs. Culling's captive. I will see your friend in a moment.

[*Exit with* Mrs. CULLING.

Canon. [*Trotting after him.*] What an extraordinary man it is.

Enter LORD BELHURST *and* SYLVIA.

Sylvia. At last I have found you. I am so glad; I have something—[*with assumed dignity*]—very, *very* important to tell you. Now, guess what it is? I give it you in three?

Lord B. [*Anxious.*] No, no, Sylvia, I cannot guess. Tell me. [*In a graver tone*] It may be even more important than you think it.

Sylvia. [*Laughing.*] Oh, that's impossible. It's the most important of all the important things that can happen to a woman. Now can't you guess? [Lord BELHURST *shakes his head with the same anxious look.*] Poor dear! I won't tease you any longer. Maurice is asking when we are to be married.

Lord B. [*Hastily.*] Married! It can't be!

Sylvia. Father!

Lord B. Not yet—your nerves are overstrained. I have suspected it a long time. Now I know it. You

must have complete rest—special care for a time. It is imperative!

Sylvia. [*Alarmed.*] Special care? I am not ill—I don't understand.

[*Enter* Colonel ANSON. *Cheerfully.*

Col. A. Lord Belhurst, Sylvia has told you. When is it to be?

Lord B. Not yet, Anson. It cannot be yet.

Col. A. [*Looking towards* SYLVIA, *who has sunk down on a sofa.*] Not yet! Sylvia! How pale she looks. Oh, she is not ill?

[*Movement towards her*, Lord BELHURST *detaining him.*

Lord B. Hush! That is it. She is seriously overwrought. Dr. Tregenna says——

Col. A. Tregenna? That man!

Lord B. Dr. Tregenna advises complete rest for a time. She must go——

Col. A. Go where?

Lord B. Into his care—only for a time.

Col. A. [*Aghast.*] His—Tregenna's care! You are going to commit Sylvia to him?

Lord B. As a patient, now——

Col. A. But what do you know of him?

Lord B. That he is a great doctor.

Col. A. Doctor! I distrust him as a man.

Lord B. Nonsense, nonsense, Anson. Don't be so prejudiced. You've dropped behind the time here whilst you have been winning your way abroad. Dr. Tregenna is achieving—has achieved an extraordinary position in dealing with just such cases. Go—go, my dear fellow. Don't let Sylvia be unduly alarmed. Take her to the ball-room. They are beginning the cotillon; it may help to cheer her. You and I will speak of this alone, later.

Col. A. But——

Lord B. He is coming.

[Colonel ANSON *goes to* SYLVIA, *she takes his arm.*

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Dr. TREGENNA. SYLVIA *stands bewildered, looking from her father to him.*

Sylvia. Oh, what does it mean? Dr. Tregenna——

[*She approaches him pleadingly, and as though seeking his protection.* Colonel ANSON *interposes himself between them.*

Tregenna. [*Raising her hand with a soothing gesture.* Not now, Miss Wynford, not now.

[Colonel ANSON *leads her away.* Dr. TREGENNA *watches them disappear among the dancers.* Lord BELHURST *sinks into a chair and covers his face with his hands. Dance music for a few seconds.*

I lost the mother, and now the daughter is given to me.—To save for the man who ruined my life the only being who makes his worth living.—And yet men say I am a cynic!

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

A Week Later.

Scene.—Dr. Tregenna's *consulting room at "The Retreat," Hampstead. A large and brightly furnished apartment. Pictures on the walls, a big writing-table, on which stands in a prominent position a vase containing two fine roses. A pianoforte, chairs, sofas, etc. At back of stage, French windows opening on a garden. Near windows an aviary, full of birds, on a stand.*

[Dr. Tregenna *discovered sitting at writing-table, with pen in his hand. He finishes his writing, then takes out his watch and looks at it.*

Tregenna. Twelve o'clock. They will soon be here.

[*A knock is heard at door.*

[*Turning.*] Come in!

Enter Dora Bell *and* Bill Burge.

Nurse Bell and her docile charge! And how is Nurse Bell on this beautiful morning?

Dora. [*Excited.*] I am not made of cast iron, doctor; really I can't, and I won't bear any more from this—this—person!

Tregenna. This gentleman has been afflicting? It seems —[*looking* Bill Burge *over*]—almost incredible.

Burge. [*Sullenly.*] I cawn't 'elp it! She goes on at

me—[*shoots a murderous glance at* DORA BELL]—as if she 'spected to find a bloomin' toff. And I ain't!

Tregenna. What do you say?

Burge. I says I ain't a bloomin' toff.

Tregenna. Your statement carries conviction. [*Turning to* DORA BELL.] Mr. Burge remarks that he is, unluckily, not a blooming toff.

Dora. When I came here as nurse, I did not expect to have to attend upon—upon this sort of thing.

Tregenna. I can assure you this gentleman possesses a nervous system just like the average peer's, and should, therefore, appeal as poignantly to your charitable instincts. [*Turning sharply on* BILL BURGE.] Why don't you appeal to this lady's charitable instincts, sir?

Burge. [*Backing from* Dr. TREGENNA.] I dunno!

Dora. I can do nothing with him. He gets worse every day.

Tregenna. [*Smiling.*] Gets worse every day, does he? How strange!

Dora. His manners are odious.

Tregenna. A nurse should overlook little trifles of deportment, and remember that all suffering humanity alike claims our pity.

Dora. [*As if struck by his tone.*] Do you pity your patients, Doctor?

Tregenna. So much that I sometimes cure them.

Dora. [*Pointing to* BURGE.] Is he being cured?

[BURGE *watching and listening sullenly.*

Tregenna. Why not? Come here, Mr. Burge. [BURGE *approaches.*] Within this shell, this husk, that afflicts you so much, Nurse Bell, a wonderful development is taking place. [BURGE *gives an inarticulate growl.*] You hear—the soul speaks out of its prison!

Dora. [*Half frightened, half fascinated.*] What de-

velopment? I think he gets more difficult to manage every day.

Tregenna. Because he is gradually waking to a knowledge of his possibilities. [*Sharply to* BURGE.] Aren't you, Burge?

Burge. Garn! [*With sinister glance at* Doctor, *which gradually changes to an expression of fear.*] Don't keep all on lookin' at me like that! It gives me the blooming creeps! Don't, I tell yer!

[*Clenching his fists in nervous excitement.*

Tregenna. You see each day, Nurse, I take him one step further along the road.

Dora. To health?

Tregenna. Of course, of course.

Dora. All the same—I did not come here to—

Tregenna. To do your duty as a nurse, eh?

Dora. [*Frightened.*] I didn't mean that.

Tregenna. What did you mean then, girl? What did you mean?

Dora. [*Meekly.*] Only that I'd—I'd rather have another patient—more—more in sympathy with me, Doctor.

Tregenna. You are craving for sympathy?

Dora. Yes, indeed—indeed I am!

Tregenna. That's a great waste of time! And so this gentleman's [*indicating* BURGE] not sympathetic? I'm sorry I can't interrupt the progress of Mr. Burge's mind in order to facilitate the journey of your—h'm—heart.

Dora. [*In despair.*] Oh!

Tregenna. So for the present you must fancy he is a duke.

Dora. [*Near door.*] A duke, indeed! This—a duke.

Burge. Garn! Blimy! I'm as good as a bloomin' nuss.

Dora. How dare—

Tregenna. Hush! This gentleman is a Socialist; we must respect his convictions. By-the-bye [*surveying* BURGE *critically*] it shouldn't be difficult to fancy that he is a duke. His untidiness is quite aristocratic! Take him away, nurse, and smarten him up a bit. His wife's coming to-day.

Dora. His wife! Has the creature a wife?

Tregenna. Oh, yes! but you need not be alarmed at that. She won't be jealous. I'll tell her she can rely on your discretion. And so I am sure will the Canon, who's coming with her.

Dora. Uncle Augustin?

Tregenna. Yes. You don't seem pleased! Shan't you be glad to see him?

Dora. [*Snappishly.*] Oh! I don't know, I am sure. If it hadn't been for his advice I should never have gone in—for—for—[*with a vicious pluck at* BURGE'S *arm*]—for good works. [*Exeunt* DORA *and* BURGE.

Tregenna. [*Looking after her, and with his dry cackling laugh.*] No, I suppose not. But she's a little hard on her uncle. I suppose it's his doing, perhaps, that she devoted herself to the science of man. But I'm responsible for giving her the wrong man.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Canon Slade-Smith, sir, to see you; and Mrs. Burge, sir—and—and—[*with slight hesitation*]—and other visitors.

Tregenna. Show them in.

[Servant *shows in* Canon SLADE-SMITH *and* Mrs. BURGE, *followed by* SAM CHEESEMAN *and* JOE GREEN.

Canon. [*Fussily.*] Here we are, my dear Tregenna. Here is Mrs. Burge—overflowing with gratitude to you.

Tregenna. I am delighted to welcome Mrs. Burge.

[Mrs. BURGE *bobs a curtsey.*

Canon. And I have taken the liberty of bringing two of our suspicious friends from the East End, that they may see Burge for themselves.

Tregenna. [*Eyeing* SAM *intently through his glasses.*] Oh! to be sure. I remember Mr.—Mr. Cheeseman.

Sam. [*With uneasy defiance.*] That's right, guv'nor.

Tregenna. Mr. Cheeseman is in trade, I think, a——

Sam. Call it coster, guv'nor, and you won't be far aht.

Tregenna. Exactly—though I was going to say "travelling greengrocer." And your friend here?

Joe Green. Green, sir; Joe Green, in the fried fish business.

Tregenna. Green; in the fried fish business. A most savoury calling. And you, Mr. Cheeseman; have you come to consult me again? Sit down there!

[*Moving to large invalid easy chair.*

Sam. [*Backing cautiously away from it.*] Wot? Set in that there machine? Not me!

Joe Green. What are yer 'fraid of, stoopid?

Sam. [*Angrily.*] Stoopid yerself! Think I ain't fly to them doctors' dodges? Never get up again, like as not!

Tregenna. [*Producing stethoscope.*] Come now, let me complete my interrupted examination.

Sam. [*Starting violently.*] Garn! Stow that bloomin' telescope, or I takes my 'ook.

Tregenna. [*Pocketing instrument with a grim smile.*] Oh, well. It's not needed, I think I diagnosed your case the other day.

Joe Green. 'Ear that, Sammy? The doctor dog-nosed somethin' when he sniffed round you the other day.

Sam. [*Disturbed, but with affected contempt.*] Rats!

Tregenna. No, that's Mr. Burge's complaint. Yours is something quite different.

Canon. [*Interested.*] Did you really, Tregenna, discover——

Tregenna. Certainly. Distinct symptoms of fatty degeneration.

Canon. [*Concerned.*] Dear me! Dear me! Of the heart?

Tregenna. The heart? Oh, dear no; the head.

Enter DORA *and* BURGE.

Canon. Ah, Dora! Glad to see you. My good Burge, it rejoices me to meet you in this peaceful sanctuary.

Sam. Wot ch'er, Bill?

Joe Green. 'Ow d'yer feel about the chump now, old sonny?

Mrs. B. [*To* BURGE.] 'Ow's yerself, Bill?

Burge. [*Looking at* Dr. TREGENNA.] Oh, I'm nicely, Liz.

Mrs. B. [*Astonished.*] Lawks!

[*Staring from* BURGE *to* Dr. TREGENNA.

Sam. [*Who has been closely inspecting* BURGE, *to* JOE GREEN.] My wig! ain't his 'air smooth, Joey?

Joe Green. Ar! and ain't he been clean shived? That ain't no penny scripe, I'll be bahnd!

Canon. He does seem nicely, indeed. A wonderful transformation, Doctor!

Tregenna. Mr. Burge is making rapid progress.

Mrs. B. [*To* BURGE, *anxiously.*] Ain't you yerself this mornin', Bill?

Burge. Stow it! What are you a-gettin' at, old woman?

Canon. [*Triumphantly.*] There, Mrs. Burge! what did I tell you? Your husband is doing splendidly under the doctor's fostering care. This admirable behaviour is very different from what you have been accustomed to from your good man.

Mrs. B. That it is. [*Looking at* Dr. TREGENNA.] I don't know as I 'olds with it.

Canon. Holds with it, my good woman! Why, surely——

Mrs. B. [*To* BURGE.] Are you feelin' queer, Bill?

Burge. [*In a surly voice.*] Oh! there ain't nothin' wrong with me.

Mrs. B. [*Eyeing him with a dissatisfied look.*] Sure o' that, Bill?

Burge. [*Looking at* Dr. TREGENNA. *Then impatiently.*] Yuss, I tell yer! Shut yer silly 'ed, carn't yer?

Mrs. B. [*Turning towards* Dr. TREGENNA.] He ain't 'isself, he ain't!

Tregenna. You think not, Mrs. Burge?

Mrs. B. [*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] What are you a-doin' to him? What?

Tregenna. Turning him into that beautiful ideal of woman—a model husband.

Mrs. B. [*Great excitement.*] And 'oo wants a moding 'usband—'oo? 'Oo wants a chap as cawn't speak hup for 'isself, and show 'is sperrit, I say?

Burge. Stow it!

Canon. [*Shocked.*] My dear Mrs. Burge, what black ingratitude, when——

Mrs. B. [*Interrupting.*] Not me! I don't want no 'usband as cawn't speak hup for 'isself, lip or fist.

Canon. Oh! this is shocking!

Mrs. B. [*Breathing hard.*] Is it then, is it, I say? I'd rather 'ave a hoath what I'm accustimed to, or a boot 'eel what I know, than a palaverin', sneakin' young lydy of a 'usband, what——Oh! Bill ain't 'isself; Bill ain't 'isself. [*Begins to cry.*

Canon. [*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] Really, Doctor, I am quite ashamed of this unseemly exhibition!

Tregenna. Let her cry! It won't hurt her.

Canon. But you! after all your kindness!

Tregenna. I ask no return. [*To* DORA.] You can take Burge away, Nurse Bell. [DORA *and* BURGE *go towards the door*, Mrs. BURGE *follows them, but stops half way, still whimpering.*] And now if these two "Visiting Justices," Mr. Cheeseman and his friend in the fried fish business, are satisfied with their inspection of my patient, perhaps I might say good-bye to them at the same time.

Sam. [*Who has been gazing in wonderment at* BURGE.] All right, guv'nor, we're satisfied, ain't we, Joey?

[*Nudging* JOE GREEN *with a grin and pointing over his shoulder at* BURGE.

Joe Green. Rather, Sammy! It's a merrickle, this 'ere, blest if it ain't. [*They go to door.*] Bill's quite a reformed carrickter, ain't yer, Bill?

Sam. [*Banteringly to* BURGE.] We shall 'ave you a-teaching Sunday-school soon.

Joe Green. Yuss, or giving it aht on temperance down at the University 'Ouse; shan't we, Bill?

Sam. "Bill," says you. 'Oo are you familiorizin' like that? It's *Mister* William now, I tell yer—Mr. William Bur—— Oh, Lord!

[BURGE *suddenly turns on him with a fierce growl. Exeunt* SAM CHEESEMAN *and* JOE GREEN *precipitately through door, followed by* BURGE *and* DORA.

Tregenna. [*Impatiently.*] Now, Mrs. Burge, come!

Mrs. B. [*Still sobbing.*] I won't—no, I won't until you tell me what you're doing to him.

Tregenna. [*Sudden change to sharpness.*] Go into the hall, woman, and cry there to the footman! [*Exit* Mrs. BURGE, *as if alarmed.*] Some women will never accept kindly the gentle offices of medicine.

Canon. [*In a flutter.*] The *gentle* offices! I should say—surely, surely!

Tregenna. If I were to cure the ruffian, I believe that silly creature would try to get him bound over to break the peace.

Canon. But you are curing him, my dear Tregenna. When does Sylvia, the poor lamb, come under your care?

Tregenna. To-day.

Canon. Bless me! So soon?

Tregenna. [*Glancing at his watch.*] Within an hour.

Canon. Poor child! Poor child! Her good father is very disturbed, very anxious.

Tregenna. So anxious that he troubles her peace.

Canon. Her dead mother troubled his.

Tregenna. [*Shading his eyes with his hand, as if from the sun.*] Aye! How was that?

Canon. By her indifference, poor soul—by her melancholy.

Tregenna. And by her madness, eh?

Canon. Ah, of course, you know! Dear, dear! It was really most heart-rending to see the poor lady in her last few months of life—she used to sit—[*shakes his head mournfully*]—as if in a dream, looking straight before her for hours, and pulling flowers to pieces.

Tregenna. [*Taking the two roses from vase slowly.*] How? Show me!

[*Giving one rose to* Canon SLADE-SMITH.

Canon. [*Surprised, and strewing rose-petals to the ground.*]

Tregenna. [*Watching intently.*] Like that? Ah! [*Moodily imitating bus. of* Canon SLADE-SMITH *with rose.*] I can see her! [*Sudden change of manner.*] I must watch for that in the daughter.

Canon. Oh, I understand! You are interested as a physician!

Tregenna. [*Suddenly starting up, and throwing the re-*

maining fragment of his rose to the floor with a gesture almost of violence.] Of course—as a physician!

Enter hastily, Colonel ANSON.

Col. A. Dr. Tregenna, I wish to speak to you for a moment. [Colonel ANSON *bows to* Canon SLADE-SMITH.

Tregenna. [*Icily.*] I am not accustomed to see people in this chamber unannounced.

Col. A. I'm sorry, but my business is urgent.

[*Stops abruptly and looks towards* Canon SLADE-SMITH.

Canon. [*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] Shall I depart?

[*Motion towards door.*

Tregenna. Stay, Canon, if you please. I invited you to come here. As to Colonel—er——

Col. A. Anson. I come uninvited.

Tregenna. [*Bows sarcastically.*]

Col. A. [*Abruptly.*] Miss Wynford is to be brought here to-day, I understand?

Tregenna. By her father—yes.

Col. A. As her future husband, I consider that I have a right to watch over Miss Wynford's welfare.

Tregenna. Future husbands are as full of rights as voters at an election!

Col. A. And I may tell you plainly, Dr. Tregenna, that I have protested to Lord Belhurst against this strange, this horrible project.

Canon. Do you venture to——

Tregenna. [*Gesture stopping him.*] The horrible project of placing Miss Wynford under my medical supervision?

Col. A. Why should it be? Sylvia is not ill?

Tregenna. Your statement carries weight, sir.

Col. A. If she were ill, I should know it in a moment.

Tregenna. You should become a physician—you'd make money.

Col. A. I distrust you, Dr. Tregenna; I distrust your treatment——

Canon. Really, I must solemnly protest——

Col. A. [*Still to* Dr. TREGENNA.] I tell you so, plainly.

Tregenna. I notice that you do. [*Aside to* Canon SLADE-SMITH.] I had better be alone with this lively soldier for a moment.

Canon. Lively soldier! Yours is in very truth a Christian spirit. [*Opening door.*

Tregenna. [*Gliding him out.*] A Christian spirit! I hope so. [*Exit* Canon SLADE-SMITH. *To* Colonel ANSON.] You distrust me?

Col. A. I do.

Tregenna. You think I am a charlatan, deluding Lord Belhurst and luring his daughter here for some sinister purpose?

Col. A. [*Movement of assent.*]

Tregenna. My time is fully occupied. Let Miss Wynford decide the matter for herself.

Col. A. You say that?

Tregenna. Quite indifferently. She will be here in a moment. Her father will leave her here.

Col. A. Ah!

Tregenna. Go away now.

Col. A. [*Obstinately.*] Go!

Tregenna. [*Taking out his watch.*] Come back within half-an-hour. [*Movement of* Colonel ANSON.] You shall see Miss Wynford.

Col. A. I hold you to that!

Tregenna. If—in half-an-hour—she desires to leave this house with you, she shall leave it. Even with her

father's consent, I won't keep her against her will. And now——

Enter Servant.

[Dr. TREGENNA *turns hastily, and with a gesture stops him from speaking.* [*To* Colonel ANSON.] *Au revoir!* [*Opens an opposite door.*] By this door if you please! [*Exit* Colonel ANSON, *hesitatingly.*] *To* Servant.] Lord Belhurst?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Tregenna. I will see him!

[*Exit* Servant. Dr. TREGENNA *stands near aviary making gestures to the birds. As* Servant *re-enters he ceases quickly and turns.*

Enter Lord BELHURST *and* SYLVIA. *Exit* Servant. Dr. TREGENNA *greets* Lord BELHURST; *then advances to* SYLVIA.

Sylvia. [*Agitated.*] It is you then—oh, Dr. Tregenna!

Tregenna. Yes. [*To* SYLVIA.] Miss Wynford, you and I are going to be not simply doctor and patient, but friend and friend.

Lord B. Yes, yes. [*To* SYLVIA.] My child, Dr. Tregenna is indeed going to be your friend—and mine.

Sylvia. Oh, father, I know—but——

[*Sinks down and covers her face with her hands.* Lord BELHURST *makes a movement towards her, but is arrested by* Dr. TREGENNA.

Tregenna. [*Aside, to* Lord BELHURST.] Better not, better not!

Lord B. [*Overcome.*] You think so? [*Movement of assent by* Dr. TREGENNA.] I should leave her now—at once?

Tregenna. Yes.

Lord B. So be it. [*Turns as if to go, then stops, and turns impressively towards* Dr. TREGENNA.] Dr. Tregenna, save her, care for her. I give her life, her more than life—

her soul, her reason—into your hands. It is hard to do! I do it for her sake—remembering—[*falters*]—her mother!

Tregenna. Remembering her mother—yes.

[Lord BELHURST *makes a movement as if blessing* SYLVIA, *and exit slowly. After* Lord BELHURST *exit,* Dr. TREGENNA *shuts the door sharply.*

Sylvia. [*Suddenly starting up, and wildly.*] My father! Oh, where is he?

Tregenna. [*Coming slowly towards her.*] He has gone!

Sylvia. Gone!

[*Impulsive movement towards door, which brings her close to* Dr. TREGENNA.

Tregenna. [*Taking her hands, and very calmly.*] Gone—leaving you with me, that I may heal you.

Sylvia. [*More quietly.*] Ah! It is that I can't understand! [*As if confiding in* Dr. TREGENNA.] You can tell me!—you must tell me! What is the matter with me? [Dr. TREGENNA *puts her into a chair and stands bending slightly over her.*] My father wouldn't!—Am I ill?—How can it be? I feel well.

Tregenna. At present.

Sylvia. Can I be ill without feeling it, without knowing it?

Tregenna. Yes.

Sylvia. Oh, Dr. Tregenna—no, it is not possible.

Tregenna. Half the world is ill without being aware of it.

Sylvia. Ill—ill in body?

Tregenna. Or in mind.

Sylvia. [*Fearfully.*] My mind! Oh, surely not, that would be too horrible!

Tregenna. Your mind is sick. Here you are in safety. Out there, in the world that you love and that loves you too well, you are in danger.

Sylvia. In danger of what?

Tregenna. Of many strange and hidden accidents.

Sylvia. [*Yielding to his influence, and more quietly.*] So my father told me. I could not understand.

Tregenna. Few can understand the hidden dangers of life! The dangers to the soul! [*Sitting.*] It is quiet here.

Sylvia. Yes. How quiet!

Tregenna. London is close by—yet invisible, unheard. Its harsh voices are stilled. You and I hear only my birds singing gaily. [*Points to aviary.*

Sylvia. They are always happy—the birds. Though few are always happy. It is not intended that we should be, they say.

Tregenna. Yes. So say the fools, prating idiocy and naming it philosophy. Men, women, could be happy if——

Sylvia. If what? Oh, tell me!

Tregenna. They took care of their minds even as much as they take care of their dogs and their horses. Would you feed your dog on poisoned meat?

Sylvia. No.

Tregenna. Yet you feed your mind on a poisoned world.

Sylvia. But—is it poisoned?

Tregenna. Rankly! rankly! You are better out of it for a while.

[*Sylvia.* It may be so. You almost make me feel that it is so.

Tregenna. Stay with me awhile, and I will heal your mind, and I will give you some of my power which you are feeling—even now.

Sylvia. [*Gazing at him.*] Yes—even now.

Tregenna. Do you wish to stay?

Sylvia. [*Murmuring.*] Yes, yes! I wish it! I wish it! [*After a pause, in a dreamy voice.*] It is strange to feel one's will, one's soul, one's very self so wholly in the

power of another. Strange and almost terrible. Yet I am not afraid.

Tregenna. No?

Sylvia. [*With simplicity.*] No, why should I be? My father trusts you—and I—I believe in your goodness, your gentleness, as deeply as I feel your power. I think doctors are the kindest people in the world.

Tregenna. [*Who has withdrawn his gaze from* SYLVIA *during this speech, and has sat with his eyes fixed on the ground, now looks up at her again, and speaking in a constrained voice.*] But if there were some power stronger than my own which governed me, leading me in strange and perhaps terrible paths! What then, Miss Wynford?

Sylvia. A power stronger than your own! Oh, but is there anything on earth which can rule you?

Tregenna. How can I tell? What is my will? Perhaps there is another will more powerful than that which is now subduing you, some irresistible, overwhelming force that may sweep me before it, and you with me, like leaves on a mountain flood, the soul of the monster, science, desire of knowledge! We are mysteries to ourselves.

[TREGENNA *rises from his chair and walks apart.*

Enter suddenly BILL BURGE.

[*Confronting him.*] What are you here for, Burge?

Enter hastily, DORA BELL.

[*To* DORA.] What is the meaning of this?

Dora. I can't help it. I can manage one of my own class—a gentleman, but—[*seeing* SYLVIA]—Miss Wynford!

[SYLVIA *bows indifferently, then fixes her eyes on* Dr. TREGENNA *and* BILL BURGE.

Burge. [*Jerking his head at* DORA BELL.] If she daun't git out, I'll do 'er a mischief.

[*Turns and stares at* SYLVIA.

Dora. There, Dr. Tregenna, what did I say?

Tregenna. [*Who has been closely watching* SYLVIA *and* BILL BURGE.] Nurse Bell, your soul and this gentleman's are evidently not in close sympathy. I think I shall have to make some new arrangement.

Dora. Oh, thank you, doctor, thank you! If you will put me in charge of some pleasant, interesting——

Tregenna. [*Curtly.*] That will do, Nurse Bell, thank you. [*Exit* DORA BELL. BILL BURGE *is still watching* SYLVIA.] I'm going to make an alteration in your treatment, Burge. From to-day I shall keep you more continually under my own influence. D' you hear?

Burge. [*Sullenly, with an evil look at* Dr. TREGENNA.] I 'ear.

Tregenna. Now you can go! [*Sudden pause.*] Go into the conservatory—pick me some roses—wait outside, and when I strike this bell, like this—[*strikes bell*]—bring them in to me here! Go? [*Points to French window.*

Burge. [*Going, stops by* SYLVIA. *To* Dr. TREGENNA.] Is—is she a-stoppin' on—is she—a-stoppin' long a' you—like I am?

Tregenna. Go and pick the roses.

[*Exit* BILL BURGE, *turning again at window to gaze at* SYLVIA, *then from her to* Dr. TREGENNA.

Sylvia. [*Coming nearer to* Dr. TREGENNA.] That poor man is like some wild beast.

Tregenna. [*Smiling.*] He was a wild beast—the terror of his neighbourhood—a wife-beater, almost a murderer!

Sylvia. Ah; no!

Tregenna. But I shall make of him what I will, and you—you will stay and watch the process?

Enter Colonel ANSON.

Sylvia. [*Astonished.*] Maurice!

Tregenna. Come, Colonel Anson, here is Miss Wynford. Say whatever you wish to her.

[Dr. TREGENNA *moves to writing-table, sits in chair, takes up pen and begins quietly to write.*

Col. A. [*Approaching* SYLVIA.] Sylvia!

Sylvia. You here! Why have you come?

Col. A. To take you away.

Sylvia. Away? [SYLVIA *looks at* Dr. TREGENNA.

Col. A. Yes, to your home—to your father!

Sylvia. It was my father who brought me here.

Col. A. Why? You are not ill.

Sylvia. Am I not? I don't know.

Col. A. [*Astonished.*] Sylvia!

Sylvia. I must know that—and many things!

[SYLVIA *gazing at* Dr. TREGENNA, *who continues writing.*

Col. A. [*More determined.*] Sylvia, you are not yourself to-day. Come home with me. You shall not stay here. Your father is hoodwinked—he is blind. He placed you here—I know that. But you must not obey him——

Sylvia. [*Quietly.*] It is not only my father whom I obey.

Col. A. Whom, then, is it?

Sylvia. It is he—Dr. Tregenna.

Col. A. Dr. Tregenna!

Tregenna. [*Looking up from his writing.*] Did you speak, Colonel Anson?

Col. A. [*Looking into his eyes.*] I recognize your power now—fully.

Tregenna. Indeed—what then?

Col. A. [*Doggedly*] I say you shall use it for good—instead of for evil.

Sylvia. [*Interposing.*] Dr. Tregenna is all goodness.

Col. A. [*Engrossed with* Dr. TREGENNA, *ignoring* SYLVIA.] You shall use it for good—you shall tell her to leave you!

Tregenna. [*Smiling.*] Tell a patient to go—uncured? [*Shakes his head.*] My medical pride forbids.

Sylvia. [*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] And if you did tell me to go now—I——

Col. A. What then, Sylvia?

Sylvia. I would not go.

Col. A. [*As if chilled to awe.*] You would not—even then?

Sylvia. Even then.

[Dr. TREGENNA—*gesture of grave satisfaction.* Colonel ANSON *stands for a moment looking from* SYLVIA *to* Dr. TREGENNA *with a despairing and puzzled expression, as if striving to comprehend an impenetrable mystery.*

Col. A. [*To* SYLVIA, *in an almost faltering voice.*] You—you will?

Sylvia. [*Firmly.*] I will stay here.

[Colonel ANSON *turns from* SYLVIA *and approaches* Dr. TREGENNA. *The two men stand for an instant looking into each other's eyes.*

Col. A. [*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] You have won. [Dr. TREGENNA *bows.*] For the moment. [Dr. TREGENNA *smiles. In low stern voice.*] But though you may conquer the will of a woman, remember that in me you have a man to deal with.

Tregenna. [*Sarcastically indicating* SYLVIA.] Whom a woman rules.

Col. A. But who will never be ruled by a man.

Tregenna. [*Still sarcastically.*] Not even through a woman?

Col. A. Not even through a woman.

[*Exit* Colonel ANSON.

Sylvia. [*Approaches* Dr. TREGENNA'S *writing-table in silence and stands by it*]. Dr. Tregenna!

Tregenna. Miss Wynford!

Sylvia. Make me as you are! If I am ill, cure me, save me, give me courage, give me life! I will obey you in all things. Only tell me what to do.

Tregenna. [*Rising with a sudden smile.*] And you promise to obey in all things?

Sylvia. Yes.

[Dr. TREGENNA *strikes his hand on bell. Enter* BILL BURGE *from the garden, carrying some roses.* Dr. TREGENNA *takes the roses from him and gives them to* SYLVIA. SYLVIA *sits and begins to strew the rose-petals.* BILL BURGE *watching her intently.* Dr. TREGENNA *watching also in silence for a moment.*

Tregenna. That is pretty work for women—pretty work—pretty work. [*To* BILL BURGE.] Don't you think so, Burge? You seem fascinated—eh?

[Dr. TREGENNA *stretches out his hand as if to lay it on* BILL BURGE'S *shoulder.* BILL BURGE *cowers down as if in abject fear, like an animal beneath the whip.* Dr. TREGENNA *half withdraws his hand, glances from* BILL BURGE *to* SYLVIA *and breaks into a slow laugh.*

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

(Six weeks have elapsed since the events of the 3rd Act.)

SCENE.—*The garden of "The Retreat." Time, night. Trees, with tiny lights dotted about in their branches, An illuminated fountain playing; beds of flowers outlined in light.*

[*As the curtain rises, a hidden orchestra of guitars and mandolines plays an Italian melody and a hidden singer warbles a brief serenade. In front of the stage* BILL BURGE *crouches under a tree, listening to the serenade with a brutalized wonder. At back of stage, quite in distance, a few of* Dr. TREGENNA'S *guests appear and disappear slowly among the trees. As the serenade dies away,* BILL BURGE *slinks off to a bench near the fountain, but rather secluded, and sits down, remaining in an attentive attitude, as if looking and waiting for someone.*

Enter Mrs. CULLING *and* Canon SLADE-SMITH.

Mrs. C. Your magician is determined to bring us all under his spell to-night, Canon. Really, the rumours that have been flying about London seem quite ridiculous in this enchanted garden.

Canon. Rumours, dear Mrs Culling! I have heard no rumours.

Mrs. C. And yet, since you are the Doctor's most firm adherent, they should have reached you first.

Canon. From your tone I sadly gather that they are slanders.

Mrs. C. Possibly.

Canon. [*Severely.*] I grieve to hear it. I had thought, I confess, that only the ignorance—the besotted ignorance—of the East End could mistake the beauty of my dear friend Tregenna's character. I thought that the civilization of the West End——

Mrs. C. [*Quickly.*] Oh, then the East Enders don't appreciate Dr. Tregenna's charitable ministrations?

Canon. [*Confused.*] I did not say so. I certainly never——

Mrs. C. You implied it, Canon. Then your poor *don't* worship the great man?

Canon. Their fatuous ignorance tends to make them suspicious of everybody.

Mrs. C. I don't agree with you. I think what is called their ignorance often makes them remarkably sharp. Poor people always know who are their true friends.

Canon. Indeed! Yet I have seen them try to avoid me!

Mrs. C. That certainly *does* show a certain mental confusion.

Canon. I hope so, I am sure. But these rumours to which you allude?

Mrs. C. Well, you know, people——

Canon. People!

Mrs. C. Mayfair folk, Piccadilly *trottoir* youths, even Berkeley Square fogies—and fogies *are* fogies in Berkeley Square—are beginning to murmur, just to murmur, that your doctor is——

Canon. What, in gracious name?

Mrs. C. Oh, Canon, what heterodox language! Well, a little too purely scientific. You know, Dr. Tregenna is said to be very fond of making experiments.

Canon. All great pioneers of medicine are, I conceive.

Mrs. C. Yes; but experiments made on other people's brains may be dangerous to the—er—other people!

Canon. The lack of common charity in London is simply scandalous. Why, they will be saying next that Dr. Tregenna has given this beautiful entertainment in order to——

Mrs. C. That's exactly what they are saying!

Enter Mr. WARRINGTON.

Mrs. C. Ah, Mr. Warrington, you come in a good hour! The dear Canon and I are quarrelling.

Canon. Indeed—indeed!

Mrs. C. Or, rather, I am being properly rebuked for my gossiping propensities.

Mr. W. Gossip is very pleasin' to me. I married Lady Agatha for her gossipin'. She's been gossipin' steadily to me for fifteen years, and is goin' strong at this moment.

Mrs. C. And yet men call women weak?

Canon. Harmless and amusing gossip I should not condemn.

Mrs. C. But unfortunately, Canon, harmless gossip never is amusing.

Mr. W. [*Emphatically.*] Nevah! Nevah! Lady Agatha knows that, thank heaven!

Mrs. C. And accordingly flavours her perennial *sauce piquante* with perpetual vinegar. Well, shall we go towards the house? I haven't seen Sylvia Wynford yet. Is she better?

Canon. How can it be otherwise after six weeks of seclusion?

Mrs. C. With your marvellous doctor? We shall see.

Canon. We shall indeed. And then I trust you will do my dear friend Tregenna the justice——

Mrs. C. Of considering him an angel of mercy? I'll try, Canon, and you know a woman can do anything if she tries—she can even believe in a man.

[Mrs. CULLING, Canon SLADE-SMITH, *and* Mr. WARRINGTON *exeunt talking. The sound of hidden music is again heard softly. Enter* SYLVIA, *walks very slowly down stage and pauses near fountain. She seems to be listening to the music. Presently she puts handkerchief to her eyes.* BILL BURGE, *who has been intently watching her every movement, rises and softly draws near to her, pausing before he reaches her.*

Burge. 'St! 'st! [SYLVIA *starts. Louder.*] H'st! h'st!

Sylvia. [*Seeing him.*] Why, Burge! What is it? What do you want?

Burge. [*Approaching furtively.*] Where's 'im?

Sylvia. Him! Whom do you mean?

Burge. Doctor; 'e ain't along a yer?

Sylvia. No. [*Sinking down on bench.*] Oh, how sad music sounds at night! How sad! [BILL BURGE *standing by and watching her like a faithful dog.*] Do you feel it too? It is like a voice lamenting. All music is like lamentation to me now. And yet once——

Burge. What do yer s'y, miss?

Sylvia. [*As if following out her own thoughts.*] Once I loved it for its gaiety. That was before I knew him—before I understood.

Burge. [*Almost with a snarl.*] *'Im!* Ah!

Sylvia. Him who has opened my eyes; who has taught me the meaning of life; who has shown me the depths that in my folly I never suspected—never dreamed of. [BILL BURGE *touches* SYLVIA *on shoulder. As if waking*

from a melancholy reverie.] You want to say something to me? [BILL BURGE *nods.*] What is it? Poor fellow, you too should know the terrors of life. [*Regarding him.*] That pale and hunted look in your face!

Burge. 'Unted—that's me! 'e's arter me—'e's always arter me! [*Music a little louder, approaching climax.*

Sylvia. [*Gently.*] What do you say, Burge?

Burge. [*Gazing furtively on all sides.*] 'E took me for the purpose, 'e did! 'E took me for the purpose!

Sylvia. Took you! Do you mean the Doctor? He brought you here to make you different from what you once were.

Burge. 'E did so.

Sylvia. Yes, that some day you may thank him.

Burge. [*Excited.*] Eh?

Sylvia. Thank him for all he has done for you.

[*Music ceases.*

Burge. I'll thank 'im! Yuss! I'll thank 'im—one d'y.

Sylvia. That's right. You and I both owe much to Dr. Tregenna.

Burge. *You*, miss! 'E's arter *you!*

Sylvia. I too. Before I met him I was so different, Bill, so different! You in your home in the East End, I in mine in the West. We were not as we are now. Can you—can you understand what influence means? [BURGE *shakes his head as if puzzled.*] If I asked you to do anything for me would you not do it?

Burge. Yuss! [*With sinister meaning.*] I'll do it. I'll do it for you, miss, for you!

Sylvia. [*With exaltation.*] As I would do anything for him.

Burge. 'Im! Anything wot 'e told yer!

Sylvia. Yes. Ah! Influence—the spell of one soul upon another—that is the most wonderful thing in the

world. We can't see it, we can't touch it. Yet we can feel it—you and I, in our different ways—coming upon us—his great will power, wrapping us round, stealing through all our natures. [*Touches* BURGE *on the shoulder.*] Hark? Do you not hear the soft wind in the trees? [BURGE *looks upward.*] How it stirs the leaves!

Burge. [*Nodding.*]

Sylvia. So he stirs us. And listen—listen to the music of the fountain in the light. [*Silence.*] Don't you feel it in your heart. [BURGE *makes awkward movement of ignorant response.* SYLVIA, *aloud, hysterically.*] So we feel his music [*touches her heart*] here—here.

Enter Dr. TREGENNA.

Tregenna. [*Glancing sharply from* SYLVIA *to* BILL BURGE, *who has suddenly assumed an attitude almost threatening.*] Why are you out here, Burge? Go in at once! [BILL BURGE *hesitates. Pointing towards back of stage.*] Do you hear what I say? Go!

[*Exit* BILL BURGE *very slowly and reluctantly with more than one pause, then moving away as if compelled.*

Sylvia. [*Clinging to* Dr. TREGENNA'S *arm.*] Poor, poor fellow! He too feels—bows before your will.

Tregenna. And he shall till I have finished with him. *Leading* SYLVIA *to seat by fountain.*] You are tired. Sit down here for a moment. My guests are all crowding to see a man who can imitate all our geniuses —a human monkey. They won't miss me—till he becomes a man again. Then he's dull—dull. [*They sit.* Dr. TREGENNA *narrowly observing* SYLVIA.] What has Burge been saying to you?

Sylvia. I forget. I scarcely heard. These last days I seem to be living so intensely within myself that all outer things and people seem far away.

Tregenna. [*With a manner of professional interest.*] Hah! Realities seem gradually fading away from you. You mean that?

Sylvia. Yes—yes—fading.

Tregenna. And as they fade, are their places taken?

Sylvia. I don't understand.

Tregenna. Do not the things of the brain—its phantoms as it were—become more real than the people about you, the people who pass—the trees, the waters, the dull truths of earth? Is it not so; tell me?

Sylvia. No—not yet. I seem to see you—always and only you.

Tregenna. [*Movement as if of pleasure, bending over* SYLVIA.] All the others are nothing to you!

Sylvia. [*Looking up at him.*] Nothing?

Tregenna. [*Movement as if to take her hands, then checking himself.*] But Lord Belhurst, your father! He will be here to-night. He expects to see you for a moment. Do you wish to see him?

Sylvia. [*Indifferently.*] As you will.

Tregenna. [*Always narrowly watching* SYLVIA.] You love him?

Sylvia. [*Indifferently.*] Oh, yes.

Tregenna. [*Suppressed excitement and tenderness.*] And your mother. If she had lived—how you would have loved her!

Sylvia. [*More interest.*] My mother—he never speaks to me of her!

Tregenna. [*Bitterness.*] He doubts your understanding perhaps, the strength of your nature. He thinks you only care to be happy.

Sylvia. It used to be so.

Tregenna. It is not so now?

Sylvia. No, no. Now I care only to understand, to know the truth of things.

Tregenna. That is the only living life—to know the truth of all things. [*Half hesitating, yet as if driven on to the subject despite himself.*] The truth of life—the truth of love.

Sylvia. [*Looking up in his face.*] Of love?

Tregenna. [*With suppressed emotion.*] Yes. Do you know it?

Sylvia. [*Bitterly.*] I? I forget.

Tregenna. The truth of love is strange sometimes. Love may make a man cruel.

Sylvia. How?

Tregenna. Cruel in keeping something that is not his —in caging a bird that he should allow to fly away.

Sylvia. [*Dreamily.*] Yes?

Tregenna. [*Always watching.*] He may see the bird pining in its cage—losing its power to sing, to fly. That may be terrible even to him.

Sylvia. Then why does he not let it go?

Tregenna. Because he loves it. Because [*almost fiercely*] he cannot, will not, part from it, and be alone once more—all, all alone. Oh! [*Relaxing into moody reflection.*] Your mother——

Sylvia. My mother—yes—yes?

Tregenna. You know the truth of her life—and—and death?

Sylvia. [*Growing eagerness.*] No, no. Why do I not know?

Tregenna. Perhaps, after all, it's better not.

Sylvia. Tell me of her—tell me.

Tregenna. [*Moved.*] She was so like you.

Sylvia. Like me? Did you know her then?

Tregenna. They tell me she was strangely like you.

Sylvia. Yes?—Yes? Tell me of her—tell me!

Tregenna. [*Reluctance.*] And shall I tell you what your own father has hidden from you—truth which he

fears, fearing his daughter's courage,—fearing, perhaps, her love ?

Sylvia. My father does not know me as you do. He does not know how you have changed me. But [*with growing decision*] my mother, Dr. Tregenna, my mother !

Tregenna. He could not understand her, as he cannot understand you.

Sylvia. Oh why, why is that ?

Tregenna. Men think that women must never know what life really is, because women are cowards.

Sylvia. That isn't true. We are not cowards.

Tregenna. No, but what man understands it? And some women fall ill, some women even die because no one is near them who understands them.

Sylvia. [*As if in horror.*] Do you mean that—my mother——

Tregenna. Yes.

Sylvia. She died—how ?

Tregenna. Her mind faded—her nature withered—her very soul shrivelled, from want of the right sympathy, the right love, the right soul near her.

Sylvia. Ah ! How horrible !

Tregenna. The flame of her mind went out long before the flame of her life died down.

Sylvia. [*Shudder.*] Ah—no ! And my father ! He——

Tregenna. Could only watch her die. She starved—he starved her soul to death.

Sylvia. [*Bursting into tears.*] My mother ! my poor mother !

Tregenna. You'll welcome your father to-night ?

Sylvia. [*Starting up as if in horror.*] No, no, never !

Enter Dr. RAINHAM. *He stands for a moment regarding* SYLVIA, *then looks in stern inquiry towards* Dr. TREGENNA.

Tregenna. [*To* SYLVIA.] You are tired. You had better go into the house—to your rooms.

Sylvia. [*Suddenly listless.*] Yes—I am tired!—ah! I am so tired! Let me go—let me be alone—alone!

[*Exit* SYLVIA.

[Dr. TREGENNA *and* Dr. RAINHAM *stand for a moment looking at one another in silence.*

Tregenna. [*Lightly.*] One of my guests told me just now that my garden to-night is like a beautiful dream, Rainham. Don't you agree with her?

Rain. [*Curtly.*] No! [*He watches the slowly retreating figure of* SYLVIA.] A beautiful dream!—a nightmare! Tregenna, is it true what people in London are saying of you? My God, can it be true?

Tregenna. People in London! Twaddlers! Chatterboxes! Truth only frightens them.

Rain. Truth is sometimes frightful. D' you know what they are saying of you?

Tregenna. That I am the Devil! That's mere idle rumour.

Rain. That you are pitiless. A man without humanity, without bowels of mercy; a man whose mind has strangled his soul; a man whose head has killed his heart. Is that only rumour?

Tregenna. Rumour going naked. The police should run it in.

Rain. They are saying in the West End what they have long been saying in the East End.

Tregenna. The people always lead the aristocracy by the nose. The aristocracy are so addle-pated, and the people are so bumptious.

Rain. Have you no faith in humanity?

Tregenna. None, none.

Enter BILL BURGE *at back. He moves slowly towards* Dr. TREGENNA, *unnoticed by the latter.*

I play with men because I care nothing for any man.

Rain. Some day you will find you've played with fire, and the fire will burn you to ashes. [*Sees* BILL BURGE.] Hah!

Tregenna. [*Also seeing* BILL BURGE.] Burge, did I not tell you to go into the house?

Burge. Well, wot o' that?

Tregenna. [*To* BILL BURGE.] Why are you here? You disobey my orders.

Burge. [*Doggedly.*] What are you a-doin' of to 'er?

Rain. [*Keen interest.*] Hah!

Tregenna. [*Coolly.*] I'm waiting to see you go—once for all.

Burge. What are you a-doin' of. I knows yer. [*Threateningly.*] I'll stop it—I'll tell 'em what you're up to with 'er.

Tregenna. [*Laughing.*] A pretty story, Burge!

Rain. [*Apart* to Dr. TREGENNA.] The man's dangerous!

Tregenna. [*Contemptuously.*] D' you think I don't know it?

Burge. [*More threateningly.*] You shan't do to 'er what you've been at with me! I'll let 'em know!

[Guests *seen approaching.*

Tregenna. [*Gaily.*] Then here's your opportunity.

Enter Mrs. CULLING, Lady AGATHA WARRINGTON, Mr. WARRINGTON, DORA BELL, Sir CLEMENT HOPE, Canon SLADE-SMITH, Lady MARY MAYNE, *etc.*

Mr. Warrington. Marvellous imitator—simply marvellous.

Lady Agatha. He's just like Napoleon.

Dora Bell. And Little Tich——

Lady M. And Joan of Arc!

Sir C. And Dr. Jameson——

Mrs. C. And Dan Leno; In fact everyone living and dead. But here's Dr. Tregenna.

Tregenna. [*Turning towards them.*] Anxious to give you another little entertainment. Now, Burge, tell your story. [*To* Guests.] This patient of mine wants to relate a little anecdote. [BILL BURGE *begins to look abject.*] Come, come, Burge; don't be shy! Let's have your story! [BILL BURGE *slinks slowly away.*] Dear, dear, he's gone! What a bar shyness must be to success in life. Eh, Rainham? [Dr. RAINHAM *turns away.*] Don't you agree with me, Mrs. Culling?

Mrs. C. [*Looking after* BILL BURGE.] If I were one of your—rabbits, Dr. Tregenna, I almost think I might be a little bit—I won't say exactly shy, but nervous.

Tregenna. One of my rabbits?

Sir C. [*Also looking after* BILL BURGE.] A remarkably well-grown one!

Tregenna. [*Still to* Mrs. CULLING.] Rabbits, Mrs. Culling?

Mrs. C. [*Half gravely, half lightly.*] You don't understand me?

Tregenna. I am so stupid.

Canon. My dear Tregenna, I have already explained to Mrs. Culling——

Mrs. C. The dear Canon has, indeed, as always, been persistently explanatory. Still—you know, Doctor, the vivisector has a peculiar *penchant* for rabbits. At least, so I understand.

Tregenna. [*With real feeling.*] The vivisectors! A cowardly crew! I would sweep them from the earth!

Canon. There, Mrs. Culling! Are you satisfied now?

Mrs. C. Perfectly satisfied that Dr. Tregenna is always kind to *animals*, Canon. [*She turns away.*

Tregenna. [*Genuine emotion.*] It's a knife in my own heart to see a dumb creature suffer.

Mrs. C. [*Turning suddenly.*] And the talking creatures? Men—women,—Doctor?

Tregenna. [*Looking round on his guests, who are all grouped in attitudes of keen attention.*] The talking creatures!

Lady A. Yes, Dr. Tregenna. Don't you pity us—the poor little human beings who can't claim your compassion by barking and mewing.

Dora. And twittering, like your birds, Doctor?

Tregenna. [*Change to complete hardness and irony.*] Pity you—yes, as I pity myself when I get the toothache after eating too much jam.

Mrs. C. [*Aside to* Mr. WARRINGTON.] Unkind gossip is not always merely amusing. Sometimes it is true as well.

Mr. W. And that makes it so very pleasin' and invigoratin'.

Sir C. [*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] But, I say, Doctor, that patient of yours—he's a lively looking customer. Suppose one met him alone one dark night, eh! 'Pon my word!

Canon. [*To* Dr. TREGENNA.] Your control over him is a perpetual source of amazement to me, more especially as it is purely spiritual, I may say.

Tregenna. [*Impressively.*] Ah! That's the secret!

Lady A. A secret! Oh, let me hear it, Doctor!

Tregenna. Certainly. I'm no match for that wild man, physically; he knows it; I know it. The struggle between us is the great struggle between mind and body; and so long as I keep to the weapon I have learned to use—perfectly—I'm safe.

Mrs. C. The weapon of mind?

Tregenna. Precisely. But if in a struggle with that man, a moment should ever come when I am tempted to drop the weapon of will, and to take down one [*holding up his clenched fist*] from the armoury of the body—well!—

Canon. Yes, my dear Tregenna, yes?

Tregenna. That moment will be my last!

[LADY AGATHA *and guests saying good-bye,* Dr. TREGENNA *moves up stage and eventually disappears with them among the trees.*

Mrs. C. [*To* DORA BELL.] Well, Dora, your employer 's a marvellous man—so kind to animals.

Dora. [*Peevishly.*] I wish he were more kind to me.

Mrs. C. To you?

Dora. Yes.

Mrs. C. Didn't you like nursing Burge?

Dora. No, because I'm not suited to that sort of person. The doctor should have seen that.

Mrs. C. Perhaps he did. I sometimes see a twinkle in his eye.

Dora. [*Dolefully.*] But now it's worse still.

Mrs. C. Worse than Burge?

Dora. Yes, indeed!

Mrs. C. Is that possible?

Dora. Quite possible! He's put me in charge of——

[*Almost weeping.*

Mrs. C. What?—a monster?

Dora. A woman!

Mrs. C. Ah! I always knew that whatever else he might possibly be, Dr. Tregenna was——

Dora. A brute?

Mrs. C. No, a humourist! [*Gazing quizzically at* DORA BELL.] He seems to understand women as

thoroughly as—well, as thoroughly as we understand one another. Eh, Dora?

[*The two women look at one another in silence for a moment, and then both burst out laughing.*

Sir C. [*Up stage.*] I shall catch my death under these damp trees.

Mrs. C. [*To* DORA BELL.] Your profession claims you.

Dora. [*Hurrying to* Sir CLEMENT HOPE.] Oh, poor Sir Clement! Do let me recommend——

[*Exeunt* Sir CLEMENT HOPE *and* DORA BELL.

Mrs. C. It's a thankless world! A nurse's devotion is seldom rewarded, Well, I must be going, too. Dr. Rainham! [*Calling to him.*

Rain. Yes, Mrs. Culling!

[Colonel ANSON *appears in distance.*

Mrs. C. Will you escort me to—[*Breaking off suddenly.*] Why, actually there's Colonel Anson! I thought Lord Belhurst said he wasn't invited. Colonel Anson! Colonel Anson!

Col. A. Do you want me, Mrs. Culling?

Mrs. C. My dear man, I thought you were among the millions of lost Londoners to-night!

Col. A. Lost Londoners?

Mrs. C. Excluded from Dr. Tregenna's magnificent hospitality!

Col. A. Indeed!

Mrs. C. So glad I was wrong!

[Colonel ANSON *bows in silence.*

Enter Mr. WARRINGTON.

Mr. W. [*To* Mrs. CULLING.] Lady Agatha has sent me to ask if we may have the pleasure of drivin' you back to town.

Mrs. C. Oh, how charming of her? A brougham

and two agreeable people instead of solitude and a "growler"! I come—I come! Good-bye, Colonel Anson. [*To* Dr. RAINHAM.] Good-bye! Mr. Warrington, you are my good angel!

Mr. W. A most gratifyin' profession for any man to follow.

Mrs. C. For the sake of any woman? I wish all men thought so.

Rain. But if all the men were good angels, what would be left for the women to be, Mrs. Culling.

Mrs. C. They might be good women, Dr. Rainham, and perhaps not so much further from Heaven than you—even without the wings.

[*Exeunt* Mrs. CULLING *and* Mr. WARRINGTON.

Col. A. Rainham, you know that I'm here uninvited!

Rain. Yes.

Col. A. I must see Sylvia.

Rain. [*With sympathy.*] I understand.

Col. A. [*Grasping his hand.*] Yes, you're a man, thank God, not a damned scientific machine—or worse. Where is she? Have you seen her?

Rain. Yes.

Col. A. Ah! Then she is—well? How was she looking, man—well, happy, herself?

Rain. [*Embarrassed.*] Miss Wynford has gone into her rooms, acting under Dr. Tregenna's orders.

Col. A. Tregenna, this friend of yours, and of everybody's, has cast some spell over the world—men, women bow down to him as if—why, as if he were some god—Lord Belhurst—Sylvia—and you! [Dr. RAINHAM *half turns away.* Colonel ANSON *catching his arm.*] You admire and believe in him, too?

Rain. [*Coldly.*] I admire Tregenna's talents—yes.

Col. A. And trust him—trust him? Tell me, man! [Dr. RAINHAM *looks on the ground in silence.*] You don't!

[Dr. RAINHAM *still looking on the ground.*] Why don't you speak? Ah! you're another doctor! Damn the etiquette of the profession!

Enter Lord BELHURST.

Col. A. Lord Belhurst—at last!

Lord B. [*Greeting* Dr. RAINHAM.] Where's Dr. Tregenna? I was told he was down here by the fountain.

Col. A. Do you intend to see Sylvia to-night, Lord Belhurst?

Lord B. I hope so. If Dr. Tregenna thinks it advisable.

Col. A. [*In despair.*] If Dr. Tregenna!—if Dr. Tregenna! Is the man a magician, casting dust in the eyes of the whole world? See Sylvia to-night, Lord Belhurst.

Lord B. [*Impressed by his manner.*] I hope to do so.

Col. A. See her to-night, for God's sake.

Rain. [*As if involuntarily.*] Yes—see her!

Lord B. [*Alarmed.*] But is she ill? Is she worse? Dr. Tregenna would surely have let me know. He writes that she is nearly restored to perfect health and gaiety of spirit, although she still occasionally falls into a sadder mood.

Rain. He writes that?

Lord B. Yes. Only yesterday I heard.

Col. A. See her, Lord Belhurst! Judge for yourself! [*At this moment* SYLVIA *appears wandering through the garden dreamily, as if absorbed in sorrowful meditation. Seeing her.*] Sylvia! [*Starting forward.*

Rain. [*Forcibly restraining him.*] No!

Lord B. [*To* Dr. RAINHAM; *hushed voice.*] Quite right! [*Holding out his hand to* Colonel ANSON.] Good-night, Anson.

Col. A. [*Obstinately.*] I shall not go till——

Lord B. [*With quiet dignity.*] Have you no faith in her father?

Col. A. Forgive me?

Lord B. Wait for me, Anson, wait—if you must. We'll go back to London together.

Col. A. [*Eagerly.*] Thank you!

[*Exit* Colonel ANSON. Dr. RAINHAM *going.*

Lord B. [*Who has observed* SYLVIA'S *demeanour with growing alarm.*] Dr. Rainham!

Rain. [*Stopping.*] Yes.

Lord B. You are going? [Dr. RAINHAM, *business.*] May I ask you to—[*Scrutinizing him.*] You know—I may want to speak to you presently. Will you stay near, in case I——?

Rain. Yes, Lord Belhurst, I will stay.

Lord B. Thank you, Rainham; thank you. [*Exit* Dr. RAINHAM. SYLVIA *has stopped beside the fountain, and is gazing mournfully at the falling water.* Lord BELHURST *quietly approaches her, stopping at a short distance from her.*] Sylvia! My daughter! [SYLVIA *continues absorbed. Moving to her.*] Sylvia, my child! [*Touches her.* SYLVIA *turns her head and gazes at him.*] Ah! [*movement of surprise*] the change in her! [*To* SYLVIA.] Sylvia! [*Holding out his arms.*]

Sylvia. [*Coldly.*] Father!

Lord B. What! You don't come to me! You don't welcome me?

Sylvia. [*Just touching his hand with hers.*] Yes.

[*Holding her cheek to be kissed.* Lord BELHURST *kisses her, she shrinks away.*

Lord B. [*In alarm.*] How cold you are!

Sylvia. Yes. [*Shivers.*] It is cold to-night. [*Touches her heart.*] All cold.

Lord B. [*Trying to draw her to bench.*] Come and sit with me.

Sylvia. No, father, not to-night. I want to be alone and to think.

Lord B. [*Growing horror at her strange demeanour.*] Oh, my child! But I have not seen you—talked with you for so long! And you wish to leave me?

Sylvia. [*Regarding him coldly.*] I don't know. [*Breaks off.*] To-night I——[*Abruptly.*] How can you understand? For my mother—did you understand her?

Lord B. Your mother! What is it you say?

Sylvia. No, you did not understand her. You let her pine away, for want of sympathy!

Lord B. [*In deep grief.*] Sylvia, you don't know what you are saying—the cruelty of your words.

Sylvia. Yes—but you were cruel to her.

Lord B. *I* cruel to your mother?

Sylvia. Yes. He said so. He told me all you had hidden from me.

Lord B. He! Whom do you mean?

Sylvia. Dr. Tregenna.

Lord B. [*Amazed.*] Dr. Tregenna has told you?

Sylvia. [*More excited.*] He has revealed to me what you—you, father—had concealed in the darkness. Oh, my mother! how sad she was! How she sat hour after hour, day after day, longing, desiring, and you—[*turning on him almost fiercely*]—what could you do? What could you give her? Nothing. Her soul—my mother's soul—cried for love, for the food a woman must have, or die. And she died—she died—she died! [*Weeping.* Lord BELHURST *stands as if petrified with horror. Pointing on ground.*] Can't you see her lying there, dead—dead, with her white face and her staring eyes? [*Catching at his arm.*] There! there! She's looking at us—she's looking—Oh!

[*Shrieks, and shrinks away to bench, on which she falls, covering her face with her hands.*

Enter Dr. TREGENNA *as if in search of someone. On seeing* Lord BELHURST *he, not seeing* SYLVIA, *comes forward, courteously holding out his hand.*

Tregenna. My dear Lord Belhurst, I have been searching for you.

Lord BELHURST *passively allows* Dr. TREGENNA *to take his hand.*

From what you told me I feared you would be late.

Lord B. Feared! You say you feared that?

Tregenna. Yes. But I hardly thought—[*glancing round*]—I'm afraid everyone has gone.

Lord B. All the better.

Tregenna. The music is silent.

Lord B. Then you and I can speak to each other without fear of interruption. I have come late as you say, but not, I hope, too late to see my daughter?

[*Watching* Dr. TREGENNA *closely.*

Tregenna. [*Takes out his watch.*] I am sorry—very sorry—to have to say that I fear——

Lord B. I can't see her, eh?

Tregenna. She was fatigued—I dared not keep her up. She went to her rooms some time ago.

Lord B. How long ago?

Tregenna. By this time she should have gone to rest.

Lord B. Is she better?

Tregenna. Better by far—calmer, brighter.

Lord B. Liar! liar! [Dr. TREGENNA *movement of quick surprise.*] I have seen my daughter.

Tregenna. [*Movement.*] Ah! To-night?

Lord B. To-night.

Tregenna. [*Recovering calm.*] Then you can confirm

my verdict, that she has greatly changed under my care.

Lord B. [*Suddenly grasping him by the arm.*] Changed! Changed! Look! [*He makes* Dr. TREGENNA *turn so that he can see* SYLVIA, *who is weeping.*] Changed—my God! —yes. [*Facing* Dr. TREGENNA *full.*] You shall give an account to me for this.

Tregenna. Because Miss Wynford varies in mood?

Lord B. Because she shrinks from her own father you shall tell me what you have told her?

Tregenna. I! What should I tell Miss Wynford?

Lord B. What she should never have known; her mother's——

[*Stopping short, overcome by passionate emotion.*

Tregenna. [*Harshly.*] Her mother's misery with you! Ah!

Lord B. You dare to——

Tregenna. [*With growing passion.*] Her mother's grief and growing melancholy; the tears that were ever in her eyes; the clouds that came creeping, creeping down on her soul; the fierce regret for a base deed—that ate into her heart like a canker—deeper, deeper, till the heart broke—and she died.

Lord B. Regret for a base deed? What deed? Who are you that dares to say such things to me?

Tregenna. [*Bursting into laughter.*] Only Dr. Tregenna, Lord Belhurst, only Dr. Tregenna, who worships nothing in the world but knowledge—nothing, nothing in all the world. Ha! ha! ha!

Lord B. [*Gazing at him as if overwhelmed by his outbreak.*] Rainham—Rainham—he must know—he shall tell me!

Tregenna. Rainham—he is not here. And if he were——

Lord B. Aye! if he were?

Tregenna. [*Indifference.*] Ask him then—ask him, with all my heart!

Lord B. [*Calling.*] Dr. Rainham!

[*Gesture, summoning him.*

Tregenna. [*Movement.*] What!

Enter Dr. RAINHAM.

So he *is* here, it seems! [*At* Dr. RAINHAM.] My old friend! Spying upon me!

Lord B. Rainham!

Rain. Yes.

Lord B. [*Indicating* Dr. TREGENNA.] Tell me—why—why is this man my enemy?

[Dr. RAINHAM *is silent, looking from* Lord BELHURST *to* Dr. TREGENNA.

Tregenna [*Taunting* Dr. RAINHAM.] You don't answer, Rainham? You were always reticent.

Lord B. [*To* Dr. RAINHAM.] You know—I see you know. Why is this man, who was, till I consulted him about my daughter, a stranger to me, my enemy?

Rain. [*Greatly embarrassed.*] I—I cannot—really—Lord Belhurst. [*Half turning as if to go.*

Tregenna. I—I am no enemy of Lord Belhurst's. Tell him so, Rainham, my old student friend.

Lord B. [*Growing determination.*] I will know all! This man—this stranger—has taken my daughter into his care to wreck my peace; to take from me the heart of the one being whom I love; to turn the daughter against the father; to transform beauty into the pale vacancy of—ah! Who is he, Rainham? Who is this man?

Tregenna. [*Taunting* Dr. RAINHAM *bitterly.*] Who am I,

Rainham, my old friend? Do you know? For the sake of our past together, our wild, happy, student days—[*laughing*]—say, say if I should be this man's enemy!

Rain. [*As if pressed beyond endurance.*] Tregenna, you go too far!

Tregenna. What? What? Can you say nothing.

Rain. I will say all. [*To* Lord BELHURST.] Lord Belhurst——

Tregenna. [*Perceiving that* Dr. RAINHAM *is really about to speak.*] Ah! [*Sudden change from sardonic banter to intense bitterness.*] No, Rainham, I will say all—if it is to be said. [*Turns on* Lord BELHURST.] Why am I your enemy? Because I—even I—cold, caustic seeker after the secrets of science as I am—because I too, like all men, have known how to love!

Lord B. To love!

Tregenna. The woman who became your wife.

Lord B. [*Movement.*] Helen! You——?

Tregenna. Helen, yes, I loved her. Now do you know who I am? [Lord BELHURST *silently gazes in tohis face.*] I am the penniless ship's doctor, whom the sea kept in its wintry arms while you wooed my love! I am the man who has learned the terrible secrets of the brain in striving to unlearn the terrible secrets of the heart.

Lord B. [*Awed.*] You—but I never knew! She never told me!

Tregenna. [*Not heeding.*] I never sought a revenge. But Fate interceded for me.

[*Turning towards the place where* SYLVIA *is sitting.*

Lord B. [*In horror.*] My child! I understand!

Tregenna. Yes, you understand—now.

[*Watching* SYLVIA.

Lord B. Sylvia! My child! My darling! Come with me! Come home! It is I—your father!

Sylvia. [*Starting up.*] My father—ah! [*Cry.*] Don't touch me! You killed my mother! [*Catching sight of* Dr. TREGENNA.] Don't let him touch me! Don't let him come near me!

[*With a wild cry she rushes to* Dr. TREGENNA, *and falls, as if fainting, against his breast.*

CURTAIN.

ACT V.

SCENE.—*Same as Act III. A lamp on* Dr. TREGENNA'S *table sheds a faint light.*

[BILL BURGE *discovered, with an air as of one attentive and on the watch for something. Voices heard in garden.* BILL BURGE *looks for a moment out of window, then catches up an Indian knife that is lying on the table, and hides it in his breast.*

Enter Dr. TREGENNA *from garden, supporting* SYLVIA, *who leans almost helplessly upon him,* Dr. RAINHAM *and* Lord BELHURST *following.* Dr. TREGENNA *places* SYLVIA *on the sofa, where she falls back in a half-conscious condition.*

Tregenna. You can leave, Burge. I will ring for you when I want you. [*Exit* BURGE.

[Lord BELHURST *and* Dr. TREGENNA *stand facing one another for a moment in silence.*

Lord B. [*Turning passionately on* Dr. TREGENNA.] Again I ask you, why have you done this thing? And to me—to me who have never heard your name, who never knew of your existence till I sought your aid for my unhappy daughter!

Tregenna. Unhappy now—yes. And you thought her unhappy—ill in mind when first I saw her, dancing in the light, and in the dawn of her love.

Lord B. Thought her ill! But—she was ill.

Tregenna. She was well then.

[*He looks at* SYLVIA *with a cold smile.*

Lord B. [*In horror.*] And I gave her to you!

Tregenna. Yes, so freely—so eagerly. You were generous, Lord Belhurst.

Lord B. And you. Are you a fiend, then? I say again, I never did you injury! I——

Tregenna. [*Interposing bitterly.*] Is it no injury to steal from youth its birthright of happiness? Is it no injury to turn a heart that is all love into a heart that is full of bitterness?

Lord B. Bitterness—to me?

Tregenna. To you—and through you, to all men—to humanity! Do you dare to sit in judgment upon me!

Lord B. [*With impressive earnestness.*] I sit in judgment on no man. It is you—a stranger—who have condemned me, who have robbed me, who have blighted my life and [*gesture to* SYLVIA] hers.

Tregenna. As you blighted mine, when you robbed me of the woman I loved. As you blighted mine when you turned the ardour of my heart and brain to the dark and engrossing service of science.

Lord B. [*Passion.*] If I were dying I would say—as to my very God—I never knew of even your existence till all London was ringing with your name.

Tregenna. [*Scrutinizing him.*] You never heard of Helen's distant lover? Of the lover who was on the sea?

Lord B. Never.

Tregenna. You never knew that her heart was given before she met you?

Lord B. Never.

[*Pause—during which* Dr. TREGENNA *gazes into* Lord BELHURST'S *eyes as if to read his soul.*

Tregenna. I believe you! Yes, I believe you! And now—— [*Leaning over* SYLVIA.

Lord B. Now—is it too late?

Rain. Tregenna, is it too late? Has the time indeed gone by?

Tregenna. Not yet! Not yet! [*Motions them back. Makes passes over* SYLVIA, *etc.*] In her sleep, she is passing from me. You—[*To* Lord BELHURST]—all will know it when she wakes.

Lord B. Anson! Ah, poor fellow! He is longing—waiting.

Tregenna. Waiting! Here?

Lord B. Yes; for he, too, loves, Dr. Tregenna.

Tregenna. Then—let him see her when she wakes, Oh, let the whole world see her now?

Lord B. [*To* Dr. RAINHAM.] If it is as he says——

Rain. If it is—yes. But if it is not?

Tregenna. It shall be. [*Exit* Dr. RAINHAM *to garden.*

Lord B. [*Who has accompanied* Dr. RAINHAM *to window, returning softly.*] How chilly the air becomes? Or is it my fancy? It seems to forbode some evil.

[*Shuddering.*

Tregenna. It is the dawn coming.

Lord B. Dawn! They say death often comes with the dawn.

Tregenna. Death—yes! The tide of life ebbs low between darkness and light—what of it?

Lord B. [*Looking towards* SYLVIA.] She lies so still. If—if death should be coming to her through the cold and the darkness.

Tregenna. Ah! that darkness! From which everything emerges—to which everything returns! Why should we fear it! I, at least, will not.

Lord B. [*With deep anxiety.*] But—but my child—her future!

Tregenna. She will awake! Yes, she shall have her full days of beauty.

Lord B. Thank God that it be so.

Tregenna. [*As if scarcely aware of* Lord BELHURST'S *presence.*] Helen, her mother, almost lives again in her. She shall have her full days of beauty. What am I, to take them from her—or from anyone?

[SYLVIA *moves slightly.*

Lord B. [*Breathlessly.*] She is stirring!

Tregenna. [*Recalled to alertness.* SYLVIA *moves again.*] It is so! [*Moves back slightly.*

Lord B. You are going?

Tregenna. Would you not desire it?

Lord B. But—when she wakes?

Tregenna. She will see you by her side.

Lord B. Ah! Yes; and she will shrink from me again. I cannot bear it! I cannot bear it!

Tregenna. Hush! Stay and see—see whether, even now, already, she is not nearer to the light, and to the beautiful days.

[*He looks almost tenderly down on* SYLVIA, *then moves away, and eventually goes softly to the window, where he stands with bent head, a very pale ghostly light of scarcely perceptible dawn falling upon him;* Lord BELHURST *watching* SYLVIA *with intense anxiety.*

Sylvia. [*Moving and stretching forth her arms as if to seek help.*] Ah! [*Deep shuddering sigh.*

Lord B. [*In a whisper.*] Sylvia!

Sylvia. [*Half raising herself up, looks round slowly.*] How dark it is! and how still. Is it night? Yes, night, always night! [Lord BELHURST, *with a movement towards her, arrested as she again begins to speak. Sitting up.*] I can't remember. I can't remember anything!

Lord B. [*At back*] Sylvia!

Sylvia. [*Starting.*] Was that someone speaking to me?

Lord B. [*Looking as if for assistance towards* Dr. TREGENNA.] Dr. Tregenna!

[Dr. TREGENNA *turns, and makes him an imperative sign to be silent.*

Sylvia. Who was that? I'm not alone! [*Raising her voice.* Who—I say who?

[*Turns and sees* Lord BELHURST, *who stands as if timid and abashed, half stretching forth his hands to her.*

Lord B. My child! My Sylvia!

Sylvia. [*With a cry of joy, and springing up.*] Oh! my father!

[*She sinks back on sofa, but holding out her arms to* Lord BELHURST.

Lord B. My child! My child!

[*He falls on his knees beside her.*

Sylvia. [*Throwing her arms round him.*] Father! Father!

[Dr. RAINHAM *is seen at back, trying to restrain* Colonel ANSON.

Rain. [*To* Colonel ANSON.] No—no—wait.

Col. A. [*Breaking from him.*] Let me go!

[*He rushes into room, passing* Dr. TREGENNA *at the window without recognition.*

Lord B. Anson!

Col. A. I couldn't wait!—I couldn't. Sylvia!

Rain. [*Following.*] Is she conscious—herself?

[Lord BELHURST *takes* Dr. RAINHAM *by the arm, and withdraws slightly with him, leaving* SYLVIA *and* Colonel ANSON *together.*

Col. A. Sylvia, oh, Sylvia! [SYLVIA *crics out his name.*] You will come now! You will come away to those who love you?

Sylvia. Yes. Why should I not?

Col. A. When last I asked you, Sylvia, you would not. You wished to stay. Don't you remember?

Sylvia. Here! [*Looking at room.*] Yes—I begin to—you were there—standing—and he—[*pointing to writing-table*]—he sat there, looking at us.

Col. A. [*Reproachfully.*] And you chose to stay with him?

Sylvia. No.

Col. A. You say No, Sylvia?

Sylvia. Oh, I didn't choose! It was he—he chose that I should stay! I remember now! I seem to have been in the night, bound and borne onwards.

Col. A. Yes, yes!

Sylvia. I could not tell where I was going. Only there was no light anywhere. The way was sad, so sad. And I had to go. Why was that?

Col. A. You could not choose. [*Darting a fierce look towards* Dr. TREGENNA.] Ah!

Sylvia. [*Following his look.*] What—he is here!

[*Shrinks to* Colonel ANSON. Lord BELHURST *and* Dr. RAINHAM *coming forward.* Dr. RAINHAM *passes by* Dr. TREGENNA.

Tregenna [*To* Dr. RAINHAM.] Are you satisfied now, sceptic? Does the cure strike you as nearly complete? [Dr. RAINHAM *pauses as if about to reply. Sudden violence.*] Ah! What matters it? Go! go! go! [*Exit* Dr. RAINHAM.

Sylvia [*To* Lord BELHURST.] Father, take me away! Oh, take me home!

Lord B. [*Assuming deliberately a calm and cheerful manner.*] Yes, we will go home. Come, Sylvia.

[Dr. TREGENNA *watching.*

Col. A. [*Near door.*] Yes, come, Sylvia.

[Dr. TREGENNA *comes toward her, holding out his hand with a gesture almost imploring.* SYLVIA *shrinks back a little towards the door.*

Sylvia. [*Putting out her hand as if to ward off a danger.*] No! No!

Tregenna. You will not even say farewell to your gaoler now that he has given you your freedom?

Sylvia. My gaoler! Oh, yes; you are he!

[*Hand on door.*

Tregenna. [*With profound sadness.*] And yet he loved his captive.

Sylvia. [*Startled.*] Loved! You—loved—me?

Tregenna. [*Bows his head in silence. After a pause, looking up.*] Will you not say farewell now? [SYLVIA *makes an impulsive movement towards him, looks up into his eyes, hesitates a moment in silence; then, as if horror-stricken, and fearing to come again under* Dr. TREGENNA'S *spell, she shrinks back without a word, opens the door and exit, keeping her eyes fastened upon* Dr. TREGENNA *to the last. Exeunt* Lord BELHURST *and* Colonel ANSON. Dr. TREGENNA *stands musing for a few seconds after their departure.*] Ah, I have thought to play with the souls of the world, as a man plays with lions. I have thought to tame, to torture, because I have been torn [*touching his breast*], lacerated, tortured. A soul wounded me! I would wound others in my unquiet search after knowledge—in my unquiet search after love.

[*Then, with a shrug of the shoulders, as of a man who constrains himself to the dismissal of painful thoughts, he approaches the writing-table, strikes the bell, and, seating himself in his chair begins to turn over the papers lying before him.*

Enter BILL BURGE. *He advances at first in his usual sullen manner; then, noticing that* Dr. TREGENNA'S *attention is fixed upon the papers, he approaches with a stealthier step, his hand seeking the haft of his concealed*

weapon. He is within a yard or two of the table when Dr. TREGENNA *looks quietly up.* BILL BURGE *immediately stops dead.*

Tregenna. [*In an indifferent mood.*] You may go to bed, Burge. [*His eyes are fixed upon him, and* BILL BURGE *moves a step or two towards the door.*] Stop! You may as well uncover the birds before you go. [BILL BURGE *walks to the aviary and flings back its green baize cover.* Dr. TREGENNA *unconsciously watching him,* BILL BURGE *once walks a few paces towards the door, till* Dr. TREGENNA *rises and approaches the aviary, when* BILL BURGE, *relieved from the control of his gaze, again halts.* Dr. TREGENNA, *to birds.*] Dawn! My little friends, dawn! Another day has begun for us! [*After a pause, in a dull, weary tone.*] Another day! [*Turns and sees* BILL BURGE.] Didn't you hear me, Burge? I told you you might go to bed. [*Seats himself at the table and shading his eyes with his hand, again falls into a reverie. Silence, broken only by a faint occasional chirp from the half-awakened birds.* BILL BURGE, *whose manner has become more and more wild and strange, begins to pace swiftly and noiselessly up and down after the manner of a caged wild beast.* Dr. TREGENNA *looks up, and, discovering that the man is still in the room, pushes back his chair with a sudden movement and gazes fixedly at him.*] Oho! My wild beast is restless to-night! There is mischief brewing! [*Rises and slowly moves a pace or two towards* BILL BURGE; *then, in a voice of command.*] What do you mean by this? Go to bed this instant! [BILL BURGE *retreats a step or two under his gaze, but upon* Dr. TREGENNA *turning his back as though to resume his seat,* BILL BURGE *draws the knife and is about to rush forward, when* Dr. TREGENNA *suddenly faces about, and seeing the weapon, strides rapidly towards* BILL BURGE, *till the two men are at arm's length. With arms behind his back and breast unprotected, but with gaze fixed with stern determination upon* BILL BURGE'S

face.] Drop that knife, brute! Drop it! [*Gazing upon him as if spell-bound,* BILL BURGE'S *fingers slowly unclasp and the knife falls to the ground. With a fierce laugh of triumph.*] Ha! ha! I knew it! I knew it! Back to your den, tiger! Back to your——

[*He places his two hands roughly on* BILL BURGE'S *shoulders, as though to push him from the room. With a savage growl,* BILL BURGE *springs upon him, and grasping him by the throat, forces him backwards upon the sofa. His back is turned towards the audience, and while* Dr. TREGENNA'S *hands are seen convulsively grasping* BILL BURGE'S *wrists, his face is concealed. There is a pause of half-a-minute, broken only by the heavy breathing of the murderer and the chirp of the birds. At the expiration of this interval,* BILL BURGE *lifts* Dr. TREGENNA *by main force from the sofa, holds him for an instant, and then, loosed from his grasp, the lifeless body falls heavily to the ground.* BILL BURGE *stands motionless for a moment, and then—always in absolute silence—creeps stealthily from the room. The light of the growing dawn falls upon the* Doctor's *corpse, and the birds burst into a chorus of song.*

CURTAIN.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper proc
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2009
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